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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

EUROPE has been faced this week with two more crises of the first magnitude. The development of the one, with its climax in the resignation of M. Blum, is discussed by our Paris correspondent in an article to which we have given prominence in this issue. Since that article was written M. Chautemps has completed his not very new Government. It would be going rather far to say that "Amurath to Amurath succeeds"; but at least the Front Populaire is maintained. The National Council of the Socialist Party voted in favour of participation in the Ministry by a three to one majority, and M. Blum takes office (as Vice-President) together with ten other Socialists. The Radical, M. Bonnet, goes to the Ministry of Finance, and he will doubtless be more acceptable to the Senate and the world of big business than was his predecessor, M. Vincent Auriol. There is no change at the Quai d'Orsay; M. Delbos will continue to show his qualities and the defect of them in the sphere of Foreign Affairs. But the position of the Government depends, as the British Labour Government's did in 1931, on its ability to handle the financial situation; it might succeed by drastic socialisation or frankly accept the dictatorship of the bankers. The fatal thing is to hang on with the tolerance of the banks. It is significant that the exchange value of the franc at the beginning of the new regime is lower than at any time during the crisis.

The "Leipzig" Incident

The other crisis, of German making, was at the outset far more alarming; it has already had serious results, and may yet be the prelude to worse. The refusal of Great Britain and France to join Germany in taking vengeance on "Red Spain" for the alleged torpedoing of the *Leipzig* greatly annoyed the German Government—though we can hardly believe that it surprised them. Nobody in London, or anywhere else for that matter outside Germany, really believed this story of a wanton attack by Spanish submarines. The evidence offered in support of it was of the flimsiest, and the whole thing, on the first rumour of it last week, had been publicly and officially scouted in Germany. Moreover, even if it were true, both this country and France had already made it plain that they would be no party to the infamous sort of action which the Germans took at Almeria. But whatever may have

been thought or hoped in Berlin, there was a general fear that Hitler meant mischief and would indulge in another piece of devilry single-handed, or perhaps with Italian assistance—though Italy's consent seemed doubtful. The announcement on Wednesday that Germany (with Italy following suit) had decided to withdraw from the naval control scheme, in view of the risk to her ships, came as a welcome relief to those who were expecting a massacre. But clearly this is not the end of the episode. The German and Italian fleets are still prowling about in the Mediterranean; they may be deliberately fishing for trouble there. And in any case, not merely the continuance of the control scheme, but the whole of the non-intervention policy is in question.

The Sham of Non-Intervention

Germany and Italy still remain members of the Non-Intervention Committee. They swagger in and out of it as suits their purpose; and the one thing that their presence or absence does not make much difference to is the very thing which the Committee was designed to prevent—the entry of foreign arms and troops into Spain. Though Mr. Eden constantly refers to the assistance which both the Spanish Government and the rebels have got from abroad, he does not pretend, and nobody can pretend, that the balance is not overwhelmingly in favour of Franco. Germany and Italy have seen to that, while the British and French Governments have been scrupulous in maintaining the embargo they have imposed on their own nationals. For nearly twelve months now the Spanish Republic has been denied freedom to buy the munitions it has so sorely needed for its defence. And for nearly twelve months the Fascist Powers have continued to supply the rebels. Non-intervention is in fact the same tragic farce to-day that it was from the start. What, now that they have withdrawn from the naval control scheme, is to be the policy of Hitler and Mussolini? Not, we may be sure, to stop their support of General Franco. Is it to keep the Committee in being—marking time, appealing, expressing pious hopes and acting as a useful camouflage for the import of German and Italian munitions into Spain? Even as we write, there are reports of another large influx of Italian troops.

The Need for Action

There are now two alternatives facing the States which believe in the non-intervention policy. If it can be made effective, and if, as we have been told, it can only be made effective by a control scheme, then the places vacated by Germany and Italy in that scheme must be filled by other Powers—or the control must be exercised by France and Britain alone. Whether this is feasible, whether Germany and Italy as members of the Non-Intervention Committee could or would put a veto on it, we do not know. If it is not feasible, there remains the other alternative, which is to admit the failure of the whole policy, to return to the position that ought never to have been abandoned, and to allow the Spanish Government to buy the arms it requires. But time presses, and it is imperative—not only for the sake of the Spanish Republic, which is being steadily demolished by Franco and his Fascist allies, but for the good name (now alas! none too good) of this country and of France—that a decision should be made without delay. While Lord Plymouth grumbles, Spain burns.

The Viceroy and Congress

The Viceroy's statement on the Indian deadlock has had, as was to be expected, a pretty good press in this country and a very mixed one in India. Its tone is conciliatory and perfectly friendly. But in substance it does little more than dot the i's and cross the t's of previous statements by British Ministers and provincial Governors in India. It suggests again that there is no ground for the fear that the special powers of the Governors will be used in any ordinary circumstances; it does not give the explicit assurance against their use which is demanded by Congress. To the proposal that in the event of a serious disagreement between the Governor and Ministers, dismissal of the Ministry and not resignation should be the rule, the Viceroy opposed a strong, though mildly worded, argument. He does not, however—and indeed he could not—exclude the possibility of dismissal in exceptional cases, if the Ministry insisted on it by refusing to resign. What is to be the practical outcome of all this fencing we do not yet know. The door has not been thrown open, as we hoped it would be, by Government. But it is ajar, if the Indians choose to end the deadlock and take office. Many of the Congress leaders, including Mr. Gandhi, are anxious to do so, and we shall not be surprised if the Congress Working Committee, when it meets early next month, decides to accept the Viceroy's declaration as satisfactory—or at least as a *pis aller*.

Parliament and the Profits Tax

The Debate in the House on N.D.C. (revised version) revealed little serious opposition to the new tax. The Labour Party spokesmen rightly complained that it fails completely to catch the armaments profiteer and that its yield, reduced by countervailing loss of income tax to £18 millions net in a full year, is an inadequate offset to the £400 millions of loan expenditure on the rearmament programme. Lord Horne of Slamannan has thundered in the *Times* that the ordinary shareholder, who bears the whole brunt of the tax in the case of company earnings, is being unjustly compelled to pay the cost of defending holders of fixed-interest securities from enemy aircraft. But Big Business has clearly no intention of endeavouring to repeat the *coup de grâce* which it administered to N.D.C. in its original form; the Finance Bill will now have a smooth passage. Apart from minor anomalies, such as the immunity of public utilities operating at home but not of those functioning abroad under similar conditions, the real defect of the new tax is inherent in any levy on corporation profits; it takes no account of the taxable capacity of the individuals who, in the long run, must shoulder the burden in the sense of receiving lower dividends or forfeiting the increased dividends which they would otherwise have enjoyed. No distinction is made between millionaire and "small saver." In so far as their investments are in equity shares, both pay alike.

The Steel War in America

The Board of Mediation which is attempting to settle the American steel strikes has begun work in an atmosphere of increasing bitterness between the parties. The steel companies, which have throughout refused to make any written agreement with the C.I.O., now say that they will

not enter even into oral understandings, which earlier on they professed their readiness to do. Instead, they have been threatening to reopen their closed works and keep them in production with blackleg labour under the protection of their own armed forces, or of the municipal authorities where these have taken the employers' side. In Ohio the State Governor has defeated this move for the time being by occupying the factory area with troops and forbidding the companies to reopen their works on the plea of the danger to public order; and President Roosevelt has sent a special message to the Youngstown and Republic Companies urging them to keep their factories closed while the Mediation Board is trying to settle the dispute. The strikers, who were preparing for a desperate battle with the blacklegs and the police, welcome the arrival of the State troops, and Mr. Lewis still seems confident that he will be able to force the companies' hands. Mr. Taft, chairman of the Mediation Board, has stated that the calling out of the soldiers has improved the chances of a settlement and that he is hopeful of the outcome. But there have been some very ugly incidents during the past week; and, with organised blacklegs and company troops present in force, the whole situation looks as if it might easily get out of hand.

The Forty-hour Week and the I.L.O.

The Draft Convention providing for the forty-hour week in the textile industries was passed by the required two-thirds majority at Geneva this week, although the Convention dealing with the printing and chemical trades failed for lack of a few votes. The British Government voted, of course, against all three, in partnership with the British employers; and the chances of the Convention being at all widely ratified are, in these circumstances, none too good. It was emphatically right of the Labour Party in the House of Commons to demand that this week's discussions of the Ministry of Labour vote should centre exclusively upon the Government's attitude towards the International Labour Office. For years past this attitude has been one of nearly consistent hostility to every proposal for progressive industrial legislation. The Government professes to believe that it is better to leave hours of labour to be settled by collective bargaining in each industry, and that legal regulation is a mistake. But legal regulation already exists, and has existed for a century as far as the cotton trade is concerned. Hours are regulated under the Factory Acts: the trouble is that the working week allowed is still too long.

The Fascist March

Though Sir Oswald Mosley's organisation now works on a less ambitious scale, its most despicable aspect—the encouragement and creation of anti-Semitism—continues unabated in districts where it is likely to evoke response. Once again Sir Oswald has announced an East-End march through Jewish districts where Fascist taunts and bullying have already exacerbated public feeling, and where the menace of last autumn's challenge and disturbance is still fresh. The police and Home Office have properly decided to use the machinery of the Public Order Bill, passed for the purpose last year, and have forbidden the proposed Fascist march within a scheduled area. But the Home Office has gone farther than this, forbidding all processions and demonstrations in this area for a period of six weeks. Thus the decent, unprovocative meeting is forbidden as well as the Fascist march. This is one of the most dangerous results of Fascism. Governments, finding it necessary to restrict Fascist incitement to a breach of the peace, also use the powers specially granted for this purpose to restrict the liberties of peaceable citizens.

Stocktaking in the Labour Party

The Members of Parliament are to get their increase in wages, and the Leader of the Opposition a salaried post under the British Constitution. Not unnaturally, there has been some disposition to connect this latter fact with the appearance of a memorandum, drafted by Mr. Shinwell, in which the leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party comes in for some vigorous criticism. Mr. Shinwell's document, however, seems to have been drafted some time ago, and was privately discussed with Mr. Attlee and Mr. Greenwood before it came up for general discussion in the Parliamentary Party; it had no connection with Mr. Attlee's new salaried office. Broadly, what Mr. Shinwell is saying is that the function of the Opposition is to oppose, and that no bouquets should be handed out to the Government without a snake concealed within them. Mr. Shinwell also demands a better organisation of the whole party, by means of standing committees on the various aspects of policy, for its work of opposition. Such a demand for a more vigorous policy, especially at a time when Labour's moderation is so conspicuously unsuccessful at the polls, might be expected also to include a demand for a lead to the Left. Outside Parliament, however, the party machine is busy looking for anything that looks energetic, calling it Communism and then giving it a kick in the pants.

The War on the Left

M. de Brouckère, President, and Herr Adler, Secretary, of the Labour and Socialist International, are the latest victims of the internecine struggle between the Right and the Left within the Socialist movement. Their crime is that they have agreed to discuss informally with M. Dimitrov, of the Communist International, the possibility of concerted working-class action in face of the danger of European war. There is something a little comic about a situation which allows Mr. Eden to talk to M. Litvinov, but forbids the representatives of European official Socialism from being seen in the same room with representatives of the Russian workers. But, alas! this incident only parallels internationally what is happening in Great Britain between the Labour Party and Sir Stafford Cripps, or between Mr. Bevin and the busmen whom he supposes to be under dangerous subversive influences. The European "Right," in spite of its conflicts of interest, has managed of late to agree so abominably well that the "Left" certainly cannot afford to keep on quarrelling without good cause. While Mr. Bevin is disciplining his busmen, and the L.S.I. replacing M. de Brouckère and Herr Adler by more acquiescent nonentities, the forces of European reaction are marching on from strength to strength.

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THE FRENCH CRISIS

M. BLUM'S Government lasted one year and two weeks, and disappeared with dramatic suddenness. At the beginning of June the chances were that it would muddle through until the autumn and avert a serious financial crisis until then. Of course both Blum and Auriol fully realised that France could not "go on like this" for very long, and that drastic financial reforms would be necessary sooner or later. Blum openly confessed that the situation had lasted too long in which the Treasury was obliged, year after year, to borrow an amount almost equal to its total revenue, and that something must be done. Still, there was no danger of an immediate crisis, except that June, with its seasonal drop in revenue and its large payments, is always a difficult month for the Treasury to cross.

Although I have always been careful not to overdramatise the activities of the "occult financial powers," there is no doubt this time that those powers took advantage of the Government's difficulties in order to precipitate a financial crisis. The resignation of Finaly, the managing director of the Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas, with the result that this important bank fell under the control of Moreau, the ex-governor of the Bank of France and a deadly enemy of all Governments of the Left, was a significant symptom of the offensive. A deliberate rumour was started in this connection that the Banque de Paris would refuse to renew the Treasury bills it holds. The *Oeuvre* also spoke of "a certain lunch in a restaurant in the Place Gaillon" on June 3rd, where the financial offensive was decided upon. In the days that followed the press of the Right was full of alarmist reports on the financial situation; there was a spectacular fall in rentes on the Bourse; and the *Temps*, in its stock exchange notes, wailed over this "inevitable loss of confidence." The 4 per cent. fell below 60 francs—a low record not reached since the financial crash of 1926—and there was another flight from the franc.

On Saturday, June 12th, M. Rist and M. Baudouin, two of the financial experts whom, as a concession to the banks, the Government had placed in charge of the exchange equalisation fund last March, sent in their resignations to the Government. Was this also part of the "conspiracy"? It certainly looked it, and in the Senate Vincent Auriol complained bitterly of "certain people who had let him down." It was soon learned that the experts had declared, in their letter of resignation, that France could not carry on financially without a new devaluation and without a forced conversion. Perhaps it was sound advice; but the manner in which it was given was thoroughly unhelpful. The Cabinet met on Monday, the 14th, and again on Tuesday; and it decided in the end to ask Parliament for plenary financial powers. The Bill fixed a time limit, but otherwise the powers were to be unlimited. If this drastic course was chosen, it was because the financial programme Vincent Auriol had prepared would take too long to discuss in Parliament, and there was no time to lose. The Front Populaire, it is true, had always been against plenary powers, but it could not be helped.

There were many things the Government could have done if its Bill had been passed in its original form. It could have devalued; it could have brought about a forced conversion, a forced consolidation or a forced loan; it could have prescribed complete or partial exchange control (a partial control would have saved the face of the Three-Power Declaration); it could have, as it intended, raised 5 milliards of new revenue; it could have requisitioned foreign securities, set up a strict control over the banks; it could also have resorted to a certain measure of inflation (the *Petit Parisien* foretold a new 10 milliard "advance" from the Bank of France); and it could have taken coercive measures (with what success is hard to say) obliging investors to bring their money back to France; for, according to Vincent Auriol, there are 60 milliards of French money invested abroad, and without this money, he said, France could not carry on. There was also a plan for forcing joint stock companies to keep one-third of their reserves in French Government stock. Vincent Auriol complained in the Senate that the moment Big Capital saved one franc it turned it into foreign currency; this contrasted strangely with the loyal little man—the deposits in the savings banks were steadily increasing.

On Wednesday the Chamber passed the Bill, but with three amendments. There were to be (1) no new devaluation, (2) no exchange control, and (3) no forced conversion. Otherwise, the Government could do what it liked. Blum frankly admitted that the Bill, as passed by the Chamber, left him room for adequate partial restrictions on the export of capital.

The most extraordinary incident in the Chamber that day was the decision of the Communists not to vote for the plenary powers. This decision was announced at 9 p.m. on Tuesday; but at 5 a.m. on Wednesday they reversed their decision. When their decision was announced it was clear that it would mean the end of the Front Populaire; and the fall of the Blum Government was taken for granted. In the Lobbies the Right were triumphant. Why, in the end, did the Communists relent? Leaving aside the theory of a countermanded order from Moscow, one has the impression that the manoeuvre was calculated as a demonstration of strength—and of dissatisfaction. The Communists could obviously not openly approve the proposed new indirect taxation; they also wanted to show Blum that his fate depended on them; but, above all, they wished to show their dissatisfaction with his foreign policy. At the meeting the Communists held that night Gabriel Péri, the foreign expert of the Communist Party, denounced with particular vigour the foreign policy of Delbos. Bilbao was on the point of falling, and the Communists felt very bitter about it. It was expected that the British Government was on the point of conceding belligerent rights to Franco; and would Delbos, it was asked, follow the British Government as meekly as he had always followed it? After the *Deutschland* incident he had proposed that the naval control should be turned into a genuine international blockade which might (except for the air) make non-intervention effective at last; yet when the British Government rejected his proposal, he said no more. The anger of the Communists that night is easy to understand; and it is probable that they tried to exploit Blum's difficult parliamentary position in order to obtain from him certain assurances. In this they failed; and if they decided, in the end, not to overthrow the Government

they did so for internal reasons: they felt that the French working class would not understand, and that it would be dangerous to take upon themselves the responsibility of disrupting the Front Populaire. That, I think, is the real explanation of the spectacular Communist *volte-face.*

The Plenary Powers Bill then went before the Senate; and here the real fun started. The Senate, that citadel of orthodox finance and economics, had treated the Blum Government with intense distrust from the start. Last year the Senate voted the three principal labour reforms only because they were frightened of a Front Populaire riot in the Luxembourg Garden outside. They murmured angry words to the effect that they were being "forced into this" under the pressure of the strikes; and they have since bitterly accused Blum of having deceived them when he promised them last year to apply the 40-hour week "cautiously and gradually." (In this they were not altogether wrong; for the 40-hour week has not been well applied, and has had an adverse effect on output. It is also true that, in this matter, Blum has often gone against the cautious advice of his Cabinet colleagues.) Two violent attacks on the Government were already made in the Senate a week before the crisis, one by M. Régnier, who said that the Government was killing the hotel and tourist trades with its 40-hour week, and the other by M. Gardey, the Rapporteur of the Finance Committee, who painted a catastrophic picture of the financial situation, and declared that Blum's "new deal, with its purchase power theory, had proved a dismal failure."

Although M. Gardey had not proposed any concrete financial remedies of his own, the Senate were already in a state of intense hostility when the Plenary Powers Bill was submitted to them. The Senate, that paradoxical survival of the Orleanist constitution, consider themselves the guardians of the true Republican tradition. If it is true that they have rendered the Republic some great services in the past by turning out dangerous Right-wing Governments with clearly reactionary or Fascist tendencies (Tardieu in 1930 and Doumergue in 1934), it is also true that they had come to regard Blum as a leader who scarcely fitted into the normal regime of a bourgeois republic, for the Senate is reluctant to accept what Blum calls "progressive social democracy." It is significant that among the innumerable attacks that Caillaux made on the Government there was one to the effect that:

> "If, in the past, the Government was hostile to plenary powers, and is now asking for them, what guarantee have we that M. Blum, who is favourable to parliamentary government to-day, will still be favourable to it to-morrow?"

Other Senators referred to the "non-parliamentary outlook" of the C.G.T., with its dangerous influence on the Government. In short, whether the Senate were, as the *Populaire* suggested, the agent of the 200 Families, or not, it is clear that they distrusted Blum and Auriol completely. The Finance Committee rejected the Plenary Powers Bill, and substituted for it another Bill to which was appended an interminable list of all the things that the Plenary Powers would not cover. On Saturday and again on Sunday, M. Caillaux, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, and the most influential man in the Senate, attacked the Government with poisonous scorn. Wagging his bald head, and moving his arms stiffly from side to side, the old man looked like a tragic mechanical doll. He spoke in an ironical Punch-and-Judy voice, which at times rose to the high pitch of an angry scream. His conclusion was that the Government was unworthy of the confidence it was asking for; in the words of Richepin, he said, the Government was:

> Comme une femme saoule
> Qui dans l'infini roule
> Sans savoir pourquoi, ni comment!

True, he apologised for the adjective, but that was only *pro forma.* Vincent Auriol, speaking like a crucified martyr, became almost hysterical, and although Blum treated the Senate to some home truths, and told them, in effect, that they were not the true representatives of the French people, he gave it up in the end, and the Cabinet resigned.

The fall of the Blum Government coincided with an event of great political and immense psychological significance: namely, the smashing defeat in the municipal by-election of St. Denis of Jacques Doriot, whose list was beaten (by 10,000 to 6,000 votes) by the Front Populaire list. Nothing could have shown more clearly that France was as Front Populaire as ever, and that Fascism was doomed to failure. Doriot had proclaimed far and wide that the St. Denis election would be a real test of France's "hatred of Communism." It is fortunate that Blum was overthrown by the Senate, and not by the Communists in the Chamber. If that had happened, France would have been in a state of inextricable confusion; but when the Blum Government fell, the Front Populaire was still intact, and the victory of St. Denis was a profoundly reassuring sign of the state of mind in the country.

M. Chautemps' new Cabinet will be faced with exactly the same financial problems as the last one. The greatest danger of all is that the fall of Blum may mark the beginning of a period of governmental instability. From an international point of view such a period of political confusion in France would be immensely dangerous.

Paris, June 22nd. ALEXANDER WERTH

THE BLOCKADE OF BILBAO

[In this article our correspondent, who recently returned from Bilbao, and whose account of German intervention we published last week, deals with the part played by the British Government.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

IN my last week's article, I described the evidence of German and Italian intervention that I had personally sifted during the last three weeks of the Basque defence. It showed that Bilbao was overwhelmed by German aviation and artillery supported by infantry battalions which were predominantly Italian. Britain's warning to shipping not to touch at the Basque coast was, nevertheless, one of the decisive factors in the military situation. It is all the more important to emphasise this because of the general impression in England that British ships have been freely entering Bilbao since early May.

The Basques had very little food. There was sufficient on the front, but there was not sufficient to feed the workers in the war industries or even those who were building the fortifications. A few beans, a handful of dried peas with a slice of black bread made largely from bean flour were the invariable diet of the ordinary working man and woman in Bilbao. Even in the best hotel a foreigner like myself lived largely on this diet; for four or five days we were without even bread. After five weeks in Bilbao one of the foreign correspondents, who had lived largely on local food, showed the characteristic symptoms of malnutrition. Fuel was so scarce that in any case it was difficult to obtain sufficient heating to cook even this

meagre allowance. Next to me in the tram one day there were two working girls coming back from the factory where they were employed; they were discussing quite calmly and soberly how they could secure a few scraps of food to last them through the week. They had, it appeared, been given their week's ration the night before and had been so hungry that they had eaten the whole week's supply in two meals. Bilbao was starving.

Bilbao was starved by a blockade at sea which would never have been effective had the British Government not declared it to be so. The Spanish Government had made elaborate plans for provisioning Bilbao from Antwerp. For this British ships were to be employed. Just at the time that the first cargoes were due to arrive the British warships on non-intervention patrol in Spanish waters ordered the British merchantmen into St. Jean de Luz. When, on April 10th, the leading British foodship was a few miles off Bilbao the destroyer *Blanche* wirelessed to her to "proceed to St. Jean de Luz keeping well clear of Spanish coast." When the masters arrived at St. Jean de Luz they were all formally served with a notice. "You are not," it ran, "to sail from St. Jean de Luz for any port in the hands of the Spanish Government on the north coast until further orders."

Ten days later, it is true, as a result of parliamentary pressure, these British ships, with much of their cargoes rotten, were allowed to sail. But these ten days of interruption of the food supply at a critical point had various serious results: it disorganised the supply system arranged by the Spanish authorities and there was afterwards nothing but an inadequate and makeshift supply from Valencia—no substitute at all for the regular supply of food which was to have been sent in exchange for iron ore from Antwerp. Moreover, the result of the British Government's attitude was that ship-owners who had previously traded with Bilbao were warned off and the ships that did arrive were mostly, if not all, on "time-charter" to the Spanish authorities.

Nor did British intervention stop there. Down to the time of my leaving Spain on June 12th, every British ship which asked the British naval patrol for information was told that the British Government did not advise her to enter Bilbao. It was suggested in a signal which I read that British ships should proceed instead to the French port of La Pallice; St. Jean de Luz, it was explained, was already overcrowded—presumably by British merchantmen similarly detained. I should add that of all the horrors of the final phase of the foreign invasion of the Basque country, nothing was more moving than the crowds of hungry children trying to evade the police guarding the docks and find some means of getting on board any foreign ship to beg for bread.

One of my main jobs in Bilbao was to investigate the evidence which had been given in the British House of Commons for acquiescence in Franco's "blockade." I brought out with me (and highly incongruous they seemed in Bilbao) reports of the British parliamentary debates in which the Government gave their views for declaring the ports of northern Spain to be blockaded against British shipping. The British case was built upon two contentions; first, that the rebel ships were maintaining an effective surface blockade within Spanish territorial waters. Such a contention could never have been put forward had the Government consulted anybody upon the spot. I myself inspected, together with a British naval expert, the batteries defending Bilbao Harbour approaches. They consisted of modern, in one case 1936, Vickers naval guns. It would probably be impossible for the rebels to maintain a blockade ten miles from the batteries. It would have been suicide for them to have attempted to enter within the three-mile limit. The Government's second argument upon the presence of mines was even more fantastic.

Four reasons were given by the First Lord for believing that Bilbao was mined. The first of these was that mines had been found off Santander—on the face of it, one would have supposed, not very valuable evidence as to what was happening at Bilbao. But even the facts as reported from Santander were entirely misleading. "Only yesterday," said Sir Samuel Hoare in the debate on April 20th, "I received a telegram saying that a number of mines had been swept up outside Santander." By laying the emphasis on the date on which he had received the telegram Sir Samuel conveyed the impression that the telegram related to recent events. In fact the mines at Santander had been laid by the rebels in the early hours of April 1st. The ship laying them was discovered by a patrol boat and driven off and the channel was swept clear by twelve o'clock that morning. Mines, it is true, were swept up around this date, but they were being removed from a buoyed area where they were left till their contents were required in the local munition factory.

Further to prove the Government case that mines had been laid off Bilbao in March, Sir Samuel Hoare went on to say that it was a fact which could not be denied that two or three of the mine-sweepers outside Bilbao were actually sunk by mines at that time. Had any inquiries been made it would have at once been clear that this information was quite incorrect. It is true that in January two ships, a drifter and a patrol boat, were sunk owing to an accident when live mines were being taken ashore. Apart from this no ship at all, with the doubtful exception of the *España*, suffered any damage from mines on the entire Spanish northern coast.

Sir Samuel Hoare went on to say that the fact that mine-sweeping was being undertaken by the Basques proved that there was in fact a danger of mines. It is surprising that anyone with even a limited experience of the Great War should fall into such an elementary error. Mine-sweeping in war time is a routine always undertaken. It is no proof whatsoever of the existence of mines.

Finally, in the debate of April 20th both Sir Samuel Hoare and Mr. Eden relied strongly upon a wire which like that from Santander, had arrived providentially in the nick of time. Sir Samuel Hoare read out with great effect a telegram which he said had come in during the course of the debate in which the master of a British ship, the *Olavus*, described how when he entered Bilbao he "passed unknowingly through a mine area, saw one mine and kept clear." Neither Sir Samuel Hoare nor Mr. Eden thought fit to mention to the House the date on which the master alleged he had had this alarming experience. In fact, *Olavus* had entered Bilbao on April 7th. As there was no reference in the debate of April 14th to the mine seen by the master, it seems probable that the first mention of it occurred in the telegram "which came in during the debate" so fortunately for the Government. In Bilbao I made it my business to talk to all those persons to whom the master of the *Olavus* had spoken. It was his duty, of course, to report to the local authority any dangers to navigation which he might have encountered. But the Captain of the Port to whom he had spoken at various times could not recall any mention of mines. In the file of the Director-General of Maritime Marine there was no record of any report from the captain of the *Olavus*. His agent who had spoken with him on a number of occasions had been told nothing of the mine which he saw. The ship's chandler, who spoke English, and is in fact a British subject, who had seen the captain often when he was provisioning the ship and who had heard the whole story of the captain's adventures, told me that he was positive that seeing a mine did not at that time form part of the tale.

Did then the captain, while studiously refraining from mentioning his adventure with the mine to any of the local officials, tell the British Consul about it? If so, did not the British Government have a report from the Consul and why did they not quote this report in preference to a telegram which admittedly only arrived at the very last moment in the course of the debate itself?

It seems to me quite obvious that the British Government did not receive from the British Consul any confirmation of the story of the captain of the *Olavus*. In those circumstances they should have given no credence to it. That they did give credence to it admits of only two conclusions; either

they desired to deceive the House of Commons, or else the Government were entirely reckless as to the truth or falsity of the information which they gave to the British Parliament. When one has seen with one's own eyes the effect in human misery of either this cold-blooded policy of deceit, or else this irresponsible disregard for the truth, it is very hard to excuse the part played by Great Britain in the fall of Bilbao. Italy and Germany destroyed by force of arms the Basque Republic, but it was England who dealt her the cruellest and most bitter blow. While Hitler and Mussolini struck her down Sir Samuel Hoare and Mr. Eden pinioned her arms behind her back.

A LONDON DIARY

WHAT I asked, after reading the questions in the House of Commons last Monday, is the Economic League? Interesting information is given in a penny pamphlet on the subject published by the Labour Research Department (60, Doughty Street, W.C.1). Its official and perfectly proper purpose is to do propaganda for capitalism as "the finest system that human ingenuity can devise" (its own phrase) and to combat collectivism, Socialism and Communism. The personnel includes many of the most prominent bankers, financiers, coal owners, shippers and other big employers in this country. Apart from this public purpose, the Economic League, according to the 1935 Annual Report of its London section, makes a "large number of confidential inquiries" on behalf of subscribers. What this means, one may gather, perhaps, from a privately circulated leaflet which, instead of talking any high falutin' stuff about the national menace of Socialism, etc., says that its object is "to watch and report upon the activities of individuals and organisations whose operations are directed against the best interests of subscribers."

* * *

After reading this I understood better what was implied in the questions which Mr. Windsor and Mr. Pritt put to the Attorney-General in the House of Commons last Monday. They alleged that a recent High Court case had shown that a Major Hoare and a Mr. Baker, who are officials of the Economic League, had been given access to confidential documents by the Manchester City Police. The Attorney-General did not discuss or dispute the facts; he merely differed from Mr. Pritt about whether this constituted a case for proceedings under the Official Secrets Act. In this case the confidential information seems to have concerned Communists. But the net of the Economic League seems to go much wider than this. The B.B.C. does not apparently deny the general truth of a remarkable story which the *Daily Worker* has been telling about Major Hoare's intervention in the private affairs of a member of the B.B.C. staff, who was alleged to have "Left tendencies" (not in this case Communist) and was effectively prevented from attending a meeting of the Left Book Club. What does all this come to? Apparently that we have in England an employers' organisation which "inquires" into the private affairs and opinions of workmen and of public servants and provides its members with this confidential information This is bad enough; if, as is now alleged, the police are prepared to help this organisation the dangerous implications are sufficiently obvious.

* * *

"President Roosevelt," said my American friend, "is in a bad spot over the Supreme Court issue. He has not handled it with any of his usual dexterity and his Republican enemies have at last learnt their lesson. Instead of handing it to him on a plate as they did at the last election by supporting big business and making him the champion of the small man, they have kept quiet and left all the attacking to the Liberals." "But," I said, "why doesn't he drop his Supreme Court proposals now? It cannot be a question of face-saving. That has been done for him by the recent Supreme Court decisions, the retirement of one Supreme Court judge and the promised retirement of two others. Surely that means that he has won the substance and can afford to let his proposals go?" "No," said my friend, "you have got it wrong. If the Congress elections of 1938 go Republican, the Supreme Court may easily swing back again into reaction. Therefore he has got to ensure a majority of progressive judges. There is no sign that the two promised retirements are coming off, so Roosevelt only has one place to fill. Politically it is very difficult for him not to appoint Senator Robinson, who has done all the main congressional management for him, but Senator Robinson, who used once upon a time to be a Public Utility lawyer, would be, from the legal point of view, a pretty bad appointment to the Supreme Court—an appointment that would only pass muster if his name were sandwiched in with two or three other jurists of real distinction like Professor Frankfurter. His appointment alone would be criticised as a purely political reward. Worse still, from the President's point of view, it is by no means certain that Robinson would turn out to be a progressive judge. On some things he would no doubt support the President, but he is regarded as very reactionary—look at his attitude about sharecroppers and tenant rights in his own state of Arkansas!—and he might easily turn out to be on the wrong side in future 5 to 4 decisions."

* * *

A most interesting book has recently been published in Berlin. The author, E. H. Brockhoff, is a highly-esteemed jurist and his work *Völkerrecht gegen Bolschewismus* is officially accepted and published with a preface by Dr. Frank, the German Minister of Justice. A new international law, he says, has been introduced by Hitler; its basic legal principle is anti-Bolshevik. There can be no legal relationship with the U.S.S.R. or—and this is the interesting point for us—with democratic or Liberal States because they "passively" encourage and act as the breeding grounds of Bolshevism.

* * *

Everyone ought to go to *Judgment Day* by Elmer Rice. If Göring had not actually intervened in person and threatened to lynch Dimitrov during the Reichstag Fire Trial, everyone would have said that the scene in which a similar incident occurs in the play was fantastic and unconvincing. As it is everyone gets the point of this play. At the superb curtain at the end of the second act, a very English soldierly gentleman, who had hitherto made no remark, said loudly and decisively: "This is a satire!" Even he had got it. By the end everyone had got it and the final curtain went down to cheers that went on and on. The audience was cheering the death of a tyrant and vindication of the old-fashioned idea that there is such a thing as justice, and that it is worth while standing up for it even at much personal risk and even if its results are said not for the moment to suit the "interests of the State."

* * *

I was enchanted with the new production of *Victoria Regina*. Next week Desmond MacCarthy is writing an article on it in this journal, and I want only to congratulate Mr. Housman on having at last got his plays—some of them at least—past the Lord Chamberlain, whose autocratic "their's not to reason why" power of veto is perhaps the most capricious anomaly still surviving in this country. It was interesting to learn that Mr. Housman was prevented on the first night from expressing his gratitude to King Edward VIII for ordering the ban on *Victoria Regina* to be lifted. Prevented, one wonders, by whom? I noticed that in the scene between Prince Albert and his brother Ernst the suggestion that Albert was an adulterine child had been removed. I fancy that the evidence for this suggestion is very shaky, but I presume that it was the Censor and not Mr. Housman who made the cut. For when I saw the play in Paris a month or two ago, no such alteration had been made and I am told that in New York also the scene is given in the original text.

* * *

Baker Street after dark is as a rule one of the quietest thoroughfares, but on two or three evenings a week, if you happen to be passing at about 8 o'clock, you will find it crowded. The

crowd—men, with a few women—makes for a side street behind the Portland Rooms and disappears into a small entrance; unless you know your London well, you may wonder who they are and where they are going. The attraction is all-in wrestling, a sport which with its grotesque and melodramatic tableaux recalls the amusements of the eighteenth century. During the last few years it has become astonishingly popular in London: a dozen wrestling halls have sprung up in outlying parts; bigger and more bearded fighters have been introduced from America, Borneo and Alaska. The audience of bruisers, old school ties and flash Jews and their girls, with here and there a middle-aged couple sitting sedately, cheers and jeers continuously, and there are repeated shouts of "Wheel 'em in," "I want a murder," etc. Occasionally a newspaper paragraph records that "there were wild scenes in Baker Street last night. . . ." Certainly on my last visit there I witnessed an extraordinary scene. The usual bouts were followed by a four-handed whirlwind match which lasted ten minutes. The wrestlers—two a side—began by wrestling in pairs; one of them was then tossed out of the ring and his unlucky partner had to face two opponents—which incredibly for several moments he succeeded in doing. Eventually the fourth wrestler revived and came back. The end was unexpected. The winning pair, each with an opponent's head under his arm, rushed together across the ring; two heads met, but they were the winners' own; and both dropped unconscious. The bewildered survivors shook hands and were awarded the verdict. The lights were lowered, but as I left the hall several fights, between the losers, the referee and an announcer in evening dress, were still going on. To all those who find Wimbledon, Lords and Wembley tame, I recommend Baker Street on a Wednesday evening.

* * *

The writer of the sonnet about Spain that I quoted last week was William Wordsworth. The date of the poem was 1810 and the "He" referred to was Napoleon. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to S.B.-S.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked

A lady requires a reliable man who can write short articles and paste pictures in scrap book.—Advt. in *Hampstead News and Advertiser*.

Some educational bodies had proposed a revision of school text-books so that they should tend to give what was called a peace mentality. This should not be allowed. Text-books had been written in the past without bias, and this tendency to produce text-books which put forward particular ideals, whether pacifism or anything else, was un-English and undemocratic.—Major Reyner, reported in the *Times*.

Whether a democracy based on a universal vote is possible in any country except it be an island is open to doubt.—Letter from Prof. E. W. MacBride in the *Times*.

The very great man is one who has a nickname. When a General or an Admiral or someone at the head of an office has a nickname it is a good sign. It is a very bad thing not to have one.—Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond, quoted in the *Observer*.

Who could refuse to call on a man and woman whom the bishop has accepted as communicants?—Dean Inge on Divorce in the *Evening Standard*.

Hunting gives me the friendship of the real English people. By far the most healthy, pleasant, companionable English people are the country people who follow hounds. It is the least snobbish of all pursuits.—Mr. S. P. B. Mais in the *Listener*.

LOVE, MARRIAGE, AND JEALOUSY

IT seems to me that, for intelligent and live people, successful monogamous marriage, as ordinarily professed, is impossible if jealousy persists. Marriage, as existent in fact, should not be confused with that physico-mystic, soul and body, communion of which romantic idealists occasionally dream.

So far as people who aesthetically and intellectually matter are concerned, the two great causes of marital failure are boredom and jealousy; and the greatest of these is jealousy. The first thing to determine is the biological status of jealousy. Is it an inherent, instinctive, irremovable impulse of the normal healthy human mind? Or is it the fruit of a convention which can be changed? No change in convention is going to remove the hunger problem, or even the more sublimable sex problem. Does jealousy rank with these? The answer is: yes and no. I believe that nine-tenths of all the jealousy manifested by wives and by husbands and by lovers is but a conventional perversion of the instinct of fear; and this fear arises from the taking for granted of the monogamic tradition, as though it were in accordance with instinct and with right. Yet monogamy, except during those short periods of "being in love" is, for live people, the merest convention.

That seems to me a petty form of aesthetic and spiritual sensibility which observes in the whole world in the course of decades but one human embodiment of evocative beauty. Surely, all of us who have passed through the first three or four decades of our life must have found by personal experience, first of all, that "being in love" is the most exalted of human experiences; secondly, that this period of exaltation is limited in time—lasting, it may be, but for a few weeks, it may be for a few months, but rarely extending into years. Loving is one thing; "being in love" is another. The latter is characterised by exclusiveness—exclusive individual devotion, on the one hand, and a desire for exclusive "possession" on the other; so that it is hardly possible for any but the most complacent to be passionately in love without experiencing many painful pangs of jealousy. It is the essential insecurity of the relation that explains the hunger for the security and permanence which exclusive possession alone seems to promise.

Whilst we are "in love," we are all real monogamists. Love is not so exclusive; it is more generous, more truly communistic. The more we love one, the greater the love we have to give to others. It is on such love and on such an understanding of love, and on them alone, that permanent inter-sexual relations between live and sensitive human beings can safely be built.

> Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
> They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers.
> But they fed not on the advancing hours;
> Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.

So long as we are at heart believers in the reality of conventional monogamy and of the impossibility of sharing sex love, "unnatural" jealousy will continue; because, if a man can truly love only one woman, and a woman can truly love only one man, emotional peace and comfort are impossible, for everywhere are rivalry and fear of replacement.

Quite apart from monogamic convention or monogamic theory, there exists a form of jealousy which is dependent on an assault on our sense of power—our self-assertive instinct. It is mixed up with possessiveness, exclusive possessiveness. This is the psychologic background which true Socialism will have to master in the political field. It lies at the root of that queer miserliness which drives a wealthy man or woman here and there to purchase some beautiful object, not so much to ensure continuous ability to look at it as to prevent other people from enjoying its beauty. He seems to me a vain and selfish egoist who, having won the love of a woman beautiful in spirit and in body, thenceforth regards as an affront to his dignity and to his "honour" any other appreciation of that beauty which he—merchant-like—has purchased and paid for.

Why do people marry? What do they hope to escape? What do they hope to get? I believe that a not inconsiderable minority of men and women marry because they are in love with one another; and marriage is still reckoned the conventional and only proper means whereby lovers may come more closely together without betrayal of that sentiment of honour and respect which is an essential part of their love. I think that the majority of marriages have a less idealistic basis—not necessarily a dishonourable one. Most of the finest, cleverest, happiest and in all ways most distinguished women I know to-day are unmarried; but my memory goes back a long way, and it is well within the period of my life that to be "an old maid" was a mark of failure in life. That convention had an economic basis. Marriage meant, for a woman, getting a job; failure to find a husband meant being on the dole. The economic basis of society has, from a sex point of view, changed very much in the last thirty years; but established conventions take more than thirty years to be washed out of the herd mind. I think that even to-day the majority of women who marry do so to secure a non-humiliating social status, together with a measure of economic security otherwise unobtainable. These motives are, of course, often backed up by a genuine biological, semi-conscious urge towards motherhood; but, in my opinion, love, in the romantic sense, usually plays but a small part.

What about the man? Two or three decades ago, the young man belonging to the majority group had much the same instinctive urges as those of young men of to-day. But these urges could not be easily fulfilled in ways so devoid of pathologic risk and aesthetic offence as they may be to-day. Therefore, the modern man, in the cultivated classes at all events, is inclined to postpone marriage until he has passed his biologically best procreative age. I think the majority of men marry because they want a home. Now a home wants a housekeeper; and it is but natural that if one can find a possible housekeeper who is also prepared to appease one's innate urges towards sex union and mastery, such a one approximates for an unromantic and dully masculine man to the ideal wife.

To cr about that 50 per cent. of men and women whom the institution of formal monogamic marriage suits, I have nothing to say. I want here to consider only the problem and the situation of those who marry for the idealistic reasons that they are in love with one another, that they feel they must be always together, that they are bodily, spiritually and aesthetically as one. These imagine—and this is one of Nature's cleverest tricks—that neither of them can ever feel thuswise about another person in the world; that their present mutuality is both permanent and for them unique. What a perfect start! Let us look at them again ten years later—five years, three years, later. One marriage in ten—a generous estimate—can, without hesitation, be called successful. Two or three more come under the sub-heading "not too bad"—a smiling shrug of the shoulders. Six or seven are obvious failures. Why? I am not going to discuss those coitive difficulties which obviously play a part in the unsatisfactory marriages of those to whom the physiological aspects of marriage seem of supreme importance. Equally, I am not dismissing them as of no importance; but they have been and are constantly being discussed to nausea point elsewhere.

Looking at observable facts, it is obvious that falling in love, splendid and enviable state though it is, does not of itself afford a sound basis for a permanent attachment involving the continuous propinquity of marriage. Combined with other ingredients—intellectual and aesthetic fellow-feeling, similarity of value-scales, and so on—it helps to make the best and most promising starting-ground for a truly successful and life-long intimate friendship; and it is intimate friendship which represents the highest level of relationship for a man and a woman hoping to live happily together all their lives. "Friendship is the unspeakable joy and blessing that result to two or more individuals who from constitution sympathise. Such natures are liable to no mistakes, but will know each other through thick and thin. Between two by nature alike and fitted to sympathise there is no ve l, and there can be no obstacle."

The contemporary family, in the majority of instances, strikes me as a tawdry, shabby affair. In my more priggish and contemptuous moods I am apt to think that, after all, it is good enough for most of the people who suffer it. But, in my heart, I think better of my neighbours than that; and I do feel that humanity is nowadays capable of a nobler, freer, less restricted, more positive way of life than is embodied —or, rather, fossilised—in this barbaric social unit.

What alternative can we suggest to this cramped, exclusive biological group—husband, wife and children? But for its theoretical exclusiveness and the consequent lying, deception, jealousy and frustration which our instinctive resistance to that exclusiveness involves, this group might well form a good nucleus for a pleasant, healthy and aesthetically satisfactory domestic life. If the parents are real friends as well as ex-lovers, the arrangement may be a soul-satisfying one as well. The domestic virtues are excellent things; but they do not cover the whole field of potential human virtue (I use the word in the Greek sense). Even within the limited region of sex relations there are greater and more important things than constancy, and what is commonly called fidelity. No live and vigorous man is likely, in fact, to be emotionally encysted in his early twenties. Very few men are, in reality, the life-long monogamists they pretend to be. It is because this is not openly recognised that so many marriages fail. Marriages that do not allow for romantic and physical love intimacies outside the cosy but narrow home are, for intelligent modern people, unworkable and doomed to essential failure. I realise that it is quite a good thing that the parents of children should co-operate in their rearing and their training; and, for that purpose, it would generally be best and wisest that during most of the year the parents should share the same roof. But that need involve no exclusiveness of possession, no dog-in-the-manger attitude; in other words, no jealousy. The increasing economic independence of women and the increasing use of contraceptive measures are removing those last excuses for that artificial jealousy whose roots lie not in love, but in fear. I believe that the only sound foundations for a worthy and continuous marriage are love (preferably with a history of passion behind it), true freedom, absolute candour, a complete altruistic and mutual respect, a desire for mutual understanding, and an intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual capacity for attaining to it.

HARRY ROBERTS

THE IRISH GENERAL ELECTION

IN the opinion of many observers, including the present writer, Mr. Cosgrave has a fair chance of winning the Irish Free State General Election on July 1st. Nobody foresaw this possibility two months ago. Although the enthusiasm of Mr. de Valera's followers throughout the country had manifestly waned, it was not anticipated either that so little would be accomplished towards reviving it, or that the Opposition would not only shake off their old unpopularity, but find forgiveness for some recent none too creditable performances. Indeed these last—including attacks on Mr. de Valera for co-operating with Mr. Eden in regard to Italy and Abyssinia, for not recognising General Franco's Government, for maintaining a Minister at St. Jean de Luz formally accredited to Valencia, for making a Trade Agreement with Great Britain (which the Cosgrave party actually voted against) and in general for "subservience" to the Saxon—have probably, on balance, helped their electoral prospects. With the pro-British elements the Government's attitude towards the Coronation and the Imperial Conference has wiped out the memory of Mr. Cosgrave's backslidings.

It has taken Mr. de Valera just about nine months to bring his Constitution to birth. During that period he has rarely appeared in the Dail or on public platforms, and his hold on the

country has suffered from this. Moreover, his long seclusion and the ordeal of parentage seem to have robbed him of some of his political cunning, and he has allowed himself to be decoyed of late into two or three surprising tactical errors which provided exactly the sort of material the Opposition needed. His immobilisation has been all the more serious for the Government in that normally he alone of the Ministers is relatively free of departmental work. The others are immersed in business, especially Mr. Lemass, the Minister for Industry and Commerce, who is their most effective speaker, while their back-benchers are wholly incapable of filling the gap. Furthermore, until very lately the Government Party were misled by an over-confidence which has since given place to a rather bewildered anxiety.

Mr. Cosgrave and his followers, on the other hand, are optimistic, full of fight and cured of any inhibitions which in days gone by prevented them from being as lavish in promises as their opponents. It is interesting to speculate as to what those caustic realists, the late Messrs. Kevin O'Higgins and Patrick Hogan, would have said of the programme which the men who used to be their colleagues are offering to the electorate. It includes settlement of the financial dispute with Great Britain on the basis that the Irish Debt to her is to be wiped out, as being on all fours with the British War Debt to the United States of America. It also includes the de-rating of agricultural land, the establishment of arbitration for the Civil Service, the provision of free schoolbooks for children in the National Schools and the raising of the school-leaving age—all these being policies which they had rejected when in office. It promises a reconstruction loan to farmers at a rate of interest not exceeding 3 per cent., a new Ministry of Housing, an extension of the social services and a lowering of the cost of living. These things are to be combined with a reduction of taxation and, in particular, the elimination of taxes on food. Yet every tariff protecting an Irish industry is to be retained. On the constitutional side, a Second Chamber and University Representation are to be re-established (both of which are also provided for in Mr. de Valera's Constitution), but there is to be no re-enactment of Article 12 of the old Constitution under which, prior to December last, the legislature consisted of the King and two Houses of Parliament. The Opposition abstained from voting on an amendment to the new Constitution which sought to reinstate the King, and on its final reading Mr. Dillon—their deputy leader—argued, as Mr. de Valera has been doing for years, that such matters were better omitted, since they gave Republicans an excuse for violence. Whichever side wins the Election, the King is to be for external use only. Whichever side wins, we are to remain in the Commonwealth; the difference is in the degree of co-operation. And whichever side wins, Partition will continue until we reverse many of our present tendencies.

It had been fondly hoped by Mr. de Valera and his Party that the new Constitution would light a flame of enthusiasm which would shrivel up anything their opponents might have to offer. Nothing of the sort has occurred. The fact that we are voluntarily remaining in the Commonwealth for our own convenience chills separatist hearts. In domestic matters the Constitution is voluminous and sententious and thus exposes a wide surface to criticism. Actually, to the present writer at least, it seems to be an immense improvement on the existing situation. The old Constitution has been amended so often and so drastically, both by the present Government and by their predecessors, that only some rather pitiful fragments remain, and they can be changed and demolished in a moment by a majority of one in the Dail, probably the most absolute legislative assembly in the world. Moreover, by Article 2A of the old Constitution (popularly known as the Public Safety Act) executive powers were given to the Ministry so far-reaching as to make a dictatorship and the suppression of all freedom a simple matter for any Government so minded. The new Constitution, on the other hand, sets up a system of checks and balances, including a Second Chamber, a President, or Head of the State, with certain very limited powers, and a Referendum on all Constitutional changes, or on other matters when called for by a majority of the Senate as well as one-third of the Dail and assented to by the President. And the Public Safety Act disappears.

However meritorious the new arrangements, the fact remains that the bulk of the people are bored by them. Constitutional questions leave them cold, except the familiar issues of re-union with the North and separation from the Empire, neither of which is really carried any further by these proposals. Strictly speaking the new Constitution ought not to be an issue at the General Election, because it is to be voted on by a plebiscite held simultaneously. Actually, however, Mr. Cosgrave's Party are advising the country to reject it, while the Government seem to be relying upon it almost altogether, and Mr. de Valera has declared that if defeated he will still make it the corner stone of his policy. His Government have real achievements to point to in the building up of new industries, in housing and in various kinds of social reform, but a record of things done is not enough. Irish voters look for something more than a promise of development along lines already familiar. Besides, Mr. de Valera and his colleagues have committed the capital blunder of a financial dispute with England which has impoverished the farming industries and which threatens to go on for ever.

On the whole, one's feelings about the Election are mixed. The Government have made a number of mistakes, but they realise the fact themselves, though they dare not say so, and are alive to the necessity of cleaning up much of the mess they have made if they are returned to power. It is more likely than not that Mr. de Valera in office, and with his beloved Constitution achieved, would move towards harmonious relations with Great Britain and the Commonwealth. If defeated, however, he and his Party will probably revert to political and economic separatism and shed the education they have been painfully acquiring. As may be seen from their speeches since the dissolution, even an election campaign tends to drive them in that direction. Public order is undoubtedly safer under the present Government, for nobody can handle the extremists as effectively as Mr. de Valera. On the other hand, agriculture needs to be rescued without a moment's further delay from the effects of the British tariffs and, if Mr. Cosgrave is victorious, it will be primarily because of that. If he loses, it will mean that in a short fortnight's campaign Mr. de Valera has succeeded once again in imposing the spell of his personality upon the electorate.

FRANK MACDERMOT

Dublin, June 19th.

DESIGN IN SNOW AND INK

"HER view of history," says Stevenson of Mrs. Weir in *Weir of Hermiston*, was wholly artless, a design in snow and ink; upon the one side, tender innocents with psalms on their lips; upon the other the persecutors, booted, bloody-minded, flushed with wine: a suffering Christ, a raging Beelzebub." As I read the passage I could not help thinking how odd it is that we nearly always look on other people's designs in snow and ink as childish. Stevenson clearly implies that if Mrs. Weir had been a more intelligent woman she would have seen that in the struggle between the Covenanters and their persecutors there was good and bad on both sides. When religious orthodoxy abates the orthodox man with a fixed idea of the essential wickedness of the other side becomes a figure to smile at. The Orangeman with his unflattering opinion of the Pope is in the eyes of the more easy-going Englishman largely a comic character. George Borrow's vilifications of the Jesuits are read to-day, but only for entertainment.

The design in snow and ink, indeed, is seldom taken seriously outside the circle or age in which it is popular. This is as true of fanaticism in politics as in religion. Nelson's violent

hatred of the French seems to posterity no more than a boyish wildness of the imagination. Dr. Johnson's fulminations against the Americans delight us not because we agree with them but because at this distance they are funny. One of the most amusing passages in Boswell is that in which Johnson declares: "I am willing to love all mankind, *except an American*." "And," adds Boswell, "his inflammable corruption bursting into horrid fire, he 'breathed out threatenings and slaughter,' calling them 'Rascals—Robbers—Pirates,' and exclaiming he'd 'burn and destroy them.'" And when Miss Seward, "looking to him with mild and steady astonishment," gently admonished him, he "roared out another tremendous volley, which one might fancy could be heard across the Atlantic."

Even while we smile at Johnson, however, do we not envy him in part of our nature his fine gift for abomination? Who among us regrets his own past hatreds now that he has outlived them? I cannot help feeling that my boyhood was the richer because I believed that Gladstone was a devil incarnate and that the Pope was Anti-Christ. Such convictions may narrow the mind, if persisted in, but at the time they warm the imagination. I do not regret even having once thought Sir Edward Grey a villain. It was a gross error of judgment, but, by a strange paradox, to see life as a design in snow and ink brings colour into one's vision of it.

How dull life would be without its imaginary villains! Reason bids us be warier of believing in them than in ghosts, but in youth at least these inky figments are indispensable to our happiness. Reckon up the amount of joy that it has given men and women in our own time to believe that Joseph Chamberlain was a villain or that Mr. Lloyd George was a villain. You could not, because it is beyond computation. One of the most unhappy features of the English political landscape to-day is that there is not an imaginary villain to be seen. Mr. James Maxton has tried in vain to impose himself on the Primrose League as an imaginary villain, and Mr. William Gallacher has done all that a man can do to supply the long-felt want. Even Sir Stafford Cripps, who is word-perfect in the role of imaginary villain, cannot draw a hiss of hatred from the stalls. I have met people who pretended to be able to believe that Mr. Anthony Eden is a villain; but, so far as I could see, none of them loathed him as Dr. Johnson loathed Americans. Mr. Lloyd George himself has long since ceased to act the part. Just as Henry Irving has no successor as Shylock so Joseph Chamberlain has no successor as imaginary villain. How impoverished is the life of young England in consequence!

And yet, if we look round the world at large, we are struck by the fact that the stock of imaginary villains has increased enormously. In some of the greatest countries in Europe life is seen to-day as a design in snow and ink just as it was by the wife of Weir of Hermiston. Villains on the one hand; impeccables on the other. An anti-Semitic atmosphere is especially favourable to the growth and multiplication of villains, and so, as was to be expected, there is a fine crop of imaginary villains in Germany. At the same time the Jews seem to lack any visible head like the Pope, who can be hated with a certain nobility of hatred. To hate an ordinary Jew as a villain gives as little warmth to the imagination as to hate an ordinary Catholic as a villain. To dissipate our hatred among all the members of a race is to make it commonplace. Yet, it may be replied, Dr. Johnson did this, and I agree. At the same time, I shall feel that there is something unreal and worked up about the Nazi hatred of the Jews till the Nazis have produced an individual Jew as well worth hating as the Pope or Gladstone or Joseph Chamberlain.

The Russian Communists have certainly a perfect imaginary villain in Trotsky. Whether he is a real villain or not, I cannot say; but as an imaginary villain he is incomparable. He overshadows the mind of Russia as the Pope once overshadowed the mind of the greater part of Belfast. He is the lineal successor to the personal Devil. He is the source of all evil. He lures the revolutionary to betray the revolution. He tempts simple men to wreck railway trains. He whispers into the ear of the factory worker, "Whatsoever your left hand findeth to do, do it with all your might." Wherever there is a screw loose in Russia it was Trotsky who loosened it. If I were driving a motor car in Russia and the engine boiled, I should suspect Trotsky. The Devil and all his angels—what a powerful imaginative conception it once was! It has been supplanted in Russia by Trotsky and all his Fascist Trotskyite counter-revolutionaries.

And affairs in Russia are seen as a design in snow and ink, not only in Russia but by hundreds of thousands of honest and intelligent people in other countries. Stalin—snow; Trostky—ink. Stalin can do no wrong. No sooner are a number of ex-leaders put on their trial for treason than workers meet and call for the death sentence, presumably on the Alice principle, "Sentence first, verdict afterwards." And the news is at once wirelessed in English from Moscow, and there are listeners in England who say "Stalin can do no wrong. He will give these men a fair trial, but, as a matter of fact, they would not be put on their trial at all unless it were certain that they were guilty. Therefore, even without knowing the evidence, we know that they are guilty."

I have sometimes wondered, as I listened to the comments of Communists on Russian trials, whether it is only Moscow that can do no wrong or whether it is impossible for any council or committee of Bolsheviks to do wrong. I have read an admirable speech by Stalin himself denouncing local bodies of Bolsheviks for the inhuman and unintelligent way in which they expelled honest members, unjustly accused, from the party. If these Bolsheviks in the outlying parts are fallible it seems to me just possible that mistakes may be made even by the heads of Bolshevism in Moscow. I simply cannot see contemporary life in Russia as a design in snow and ink. Many of the young and generous can do so, however, and I envy them their youth and their generosity. In youth, too, we crave for certitude, and we cannot have certitude without believing in the Man Who Can Do No Wrong and in a personal Devil or his twentieth-century equivalent.

Not to see life as a design in snow and ink at times seems even to imply a dilution of our humanity. In looking at the war in Spain, for example, we are apt to become lukewarm unless we heap all the good on one side and all the bad on the other. That is why, if we wish for the success of the Government, we instinctively do our best to explain away everything unpleasant that has been done by some section of its followers and to emphasis the humanity and idealism of the finest of them, whereas, if we support Franco, we ignore the long list of unambitious citizens that have been led out to execution and exalt him as a messenger from God, mercifully bombing Catholic Bilbao into the condition of an earthly Paradise. Mrs. Weir had the same capacity for black-and-white vision. Is it possible, lacking it, to be anything but a Laodicean?

I confess I cannot see that the world has gained much, except in imaginative pleasure, out of this black-and-white business. I do not believe that ordinary men and women have been given a passport into a happier world by Dr. Johnson's hatred of Americans or Nelson's hatred of the French. Enjoyable though it was to hate the Pope, I cannot blind myself to the fact that Europe since the time of Martin Luther would have been a much more cheerful continent to grow up in if all designs in snow and ink had been banished to the America that Johnson hated. I am sure it would be more cheerful to-day if the black-and-white artists in power began to show some appreciation of the colour of life. It seems odd that we should look down condescendingly on Mrs. Weir and yet perpetually take her for our model.

Y. Y.

Next Week July 3rd

INSURANCE NUMBER

Correspondence

LONDON MATRICULATION

SIR,—In your issue of June 19th you comment upon some remarks made by Mr. Lees-Smith in the Education debate in the House of Commons on June 14th. Mr. Lees-Smith in his speech said that "the Matriculation examination should be separated right off from the School Leaving examination," and he went on to say that "there is one university only which refuses to adopt this solution, and that is the University of London"; "the reason," he suggested, "is that it gets very large fees from the examinations which it is unwilling to release," and you declare in your leader that "this charge is true."

I protested during the debate against this imputation and inasmuch as you repeat it perhaps you will allow me to give some facts and figures which I submit demonstrate its falsity.

The Board of Education requires students in its approved schools to pass an examination on leaving school, known as the "School Leaving Examination," or the "Examination for the School Certificate." All the universities conduct these examinations and receive £2 5*s*. 0*d*. in respect of every student examined, which is paid by the Board. London University has regulations which allow a student who has obtained certain credits in this examination to be exempted from its Matriculation examination. If the student obtaining this exemption desires the Matriculation certificate, a further registration fee of two guineas is payable to the University by the student, and is not provided by the Board. The University, in order to discourage application for these certificates by students who do not intend to enter for University examinations, raised this registration-fee recently from 17*s*. 6*d*. to £2 2*s*. 0*d*. Notwithstanding the increase of fee parents are frequently ready to pay this cost in order to obtain the certificate for presentation to employers who require it.

You will see, therefore, that there is no pressure exercised by the University upon the schools to take either the Matriculation or the School Examination with credits exempting from Matriculation, and inasmuch as the fee for the Matriculation examination is £2 12*s*. 6*d*. and the fee for the School Certificate, either with or without credits, is £2 5*s*. 0*d*., there is no great pecuniary inducement to the University to press the matriculation on the Schools, this examination being on the whole more expensive to conduct than the School Certificate examination.

From the point of view of the student of matriculation age there are obvious advantages in taking the Matriculation examination, inasmuch as this examination gives him the coveted certificate and admits him to the University without any further fee. Many students leaving school without any intention of pursuing a University course subsequently take advantage of the External system of examinations at London University, which allow a student to work for a degree even while engaged in an occupation by which he may be earning his living, and this is surely a development which should be encouraged.

The mischievous position as regards home-work which results from the student being pressed while at school to take examinations is caused by the attempt on the part of the schools to make the student at 15 sit for an examination which should not be taken before the age of 16; this, however, is not the responsibility of the University, but of the schools under the control of the Board of Education. The School Certificate examination can be taken at the age of 15; the Matriculation examination cannot be taken, nor the exemption resulting from taking the School examination with credits allowed, before the age of 16. It is not the University which encourages taking the examination at too early an age.

Seventy per cent. of the students coming to London University for degree courses qualify by means of the School Certificates with credits granting exemption. If this system of exemption were no longer allowed—and the system is adopted for the convenience of the schools rather than of the University—school work would be seriously dislocated and many of our students coming from overseas with School Certificate exemptions taken in their own country would be unable to proceed to our degree courses.

It would clearly be impossible to adopt Mr. Lees-Smith's other suggestion that "the Universities should refuse permission to anyone to take the Matriculation unless they are coming to the Universities." Such a restriction could not be enforced.

House of Commons. E. GRAHAM LITTLE
(Chairman of the Council for External Students of London University).

PLATO AND COMMUNISM

SIR,—In a letter published by you on June 12th, Mr. Sewell complains that, according to Mr. Pat Sloan, a Platonist philosopher would be unable to obtain publicity in the Soviet press. He may therefore have read with interest the use to which Plato's writings are being put by the present-day government in Athens. In the *Manchester Guardian* there appears a description of a circular to schools emanating from the Greek government. The headlines are "Instructions to Greek Schools—Political Care—The Dangers of Thucydides." Among the passages quoted from this document is the following:—

> In studies of the ancient Greeks omit the funeral speech of Pericles substituting for it the speech in the Platonic dialogue [presumably this refers to the "Menexenus," in which Socrates is made to criticise a "funeral speech" given to him by Aspasia], because the praise of democratic ideals given in the funeral speech is very exaggerated, and may be misunderstood by pupils as an indirect criticism of the authoritarian system of government and of the general trends in the modern State.

Trinity College, Cambridge. R. L. M. SYNGE

SIR,—Mr. Sloan's criticism of Plato as "pre-scientific" leaves unanswered the question of the reality of freedom in Russia. What would be the position of a philosopher who wished, not to go back to Plato, but to go on from Marx; who believed, for example, that progress in natural science and psychology has made necessary a radical revision of Marxist philosophy?

Mr. Sloan may reply that as dialectical materialism is scientifically true no scientific discovery can disagree with it, but a physicist of fifty years ago would no doubt have said the same about Newtonian mechanics.

Freedom in the West has been real enough to allow the development of the relativity and quantum theories and to allow the psycho-analysts to publish theories which are profoundly disturbing to established social convention.

The price we pay for this freedom is the tolerance of astrologers and other cranks, but it is a price which gives a good return to any society which is healthy enough to be able to afford it.

Balliol College, Oxford. M. LINDSAY

SIR,—An unhappy fact emerges from Mr. Sloan's interesting letter—that there is less intellectual freedom in the U.S.S.R. to-day than in most capitalist democracies.

Mr. Sloan has raised the important question of university teaching, and refers to the replacement of professors unpopular with the authorities by "real scientists." No doubt instances could be quoted in which such action is justified, but Mr. Sloan will not need to be reminded that a similar excuse is made by Fascist governments to remove Liberal and Socialist intellectuals from teaching posts. Jeans and Eddington could hardly be described as astrologers, but I understand that their conclusions are not at all popular in Soviet educational circles.

"Freedom of the Press . . . was achieved in the Soviet Republic in 1917–18," says Mr. Sloan. While no one supposes that a Soviet government is likely to encourage advocates of either Plato or Whitehead, it seems a peculiar sort of freedom that denies expression to followers of all pre- and post-Marxian thinkers.

Mr. Bernard Shaw is among those who think it possible to agree with the economics of Communism while disagreeing with its metaphysic. Years ago he warned us against those who preach Socialism as a new revelation, whose sacred scriptures begin with the German philosophers Hegel and Feuerbach, and culminate in *Das Kapital*, "Bible of the working classes," inspired, infallible, omniscient.

Mr. Sloan has not defined "pre-scientific ideologies," but his analogy between astronomy and astrology makes it clear that he regards everything but Dialectical Materialism as superstitious and disproved. His attitude seems to me to be theological rather than philosophic. "Excommunication is not a philosophical gesture."

Modern thinkers who could not fairly be described as reactionary have made serious criticisms of the Marxist Dialectic. Bertrand Russell has shown that its "objective" interpretation of history is not without certain weaknesses. "The examples of decay and retrogression are at least as important in history as the examples of development," he writes. "The opposite view, which appears in the works of Marx and Engels, is nothing but nineteenth-century optimism."

Commenting on this, Professor C. E. M. Joad remarks: "But

even when it is applied to the actual conceptions in terms of which Marx's thought moved, the Dialectic does not yield very satisfactory results. . . ."

Marx does not say much about Scientific Materialism (as distinct from Dialectical Materialism), but in these days, when eminent physicists are doubtful about the nature of matter, Materialism is no longer regarded as "the last word" by *all* the enlightened in those countries where thought is still comparatively free.

GORDON H. SEWELL

5 Highfield Lodge,
Highfield Lane, Southampton.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

SIR,—Mr. Robert Dell, in your issue of June 12th, mentions the request of the British Delegation at Geneva to the British press representatives there to "play down" the Spanish White Book.

Another incident deserves to be narrated. One of the principal London newspapers had that morning, in an editorial, been very critical of the feasibility of the British Government's sudden enthusiasm for withdrawal of foreign combatants in Spain, which many of us correspondents suspected as merely an eleventh-hour manoeuvre to prevent—under plea of not disturbing delicate negotiations in progress—any Council action over their presence in violation of Spanish integrity under Article 16.

The spokesman of the British delegation hailed the unfortunate representative of this newspaper, slapped him on the back and said: "Oh, I say, ——, the Daily ——, had an article this morning that wasn't very helpful, you might see if you couldn't get them to be a bit more optimistic—eh?"

This peculiar "school tie" idea that it is the function of a loyal British press to put over the manoeuvres of the Foreign Office is the more presumptuous in that it is precisely in the sphere of foreign politics, and League politics to boot, that the deception of the electorate occurred which landed the present Government in power, and it is therefore in this sphere that its claim to the loyalty of the British democracy may be regarded as most questionable.

There is, further, an unfortunate side that the Foreign Office may not have thought of to this new tendency, more marked at every conference, to dictate opinions instead of handing out news to the waiting British press men.

A BRITISH CORRESPONDENT IN GENEVA

SIR,—One good thing at least seems to have arisen out of the Eden "blue-pencil" controversy—a wider recognition of the stand that the first Labour Government of New Zealand has been making against Fascism and reaction not only on its native heath, but also in Geneva and London.

The press of the world has not given New Zealand, and its High Commissioner, Mr. Jordan, full credit for its stand on behalf of Abyssinia and Spain last year, when the United Kingdom delegation was giving its usual display of political blue funk (to put the kindest construction on it). In the Imperial Conference the New Zealand delegation has probably spoken with an authority far greater than the population of its country would suggest, by urging the pro-League policy which the National Government gives only lip-service to, and may be accounted an important factor in deterring the National Government from making that *rapprochement* with Fascist countries which seems to be its main mission at present.

JOHN FISHER

London, N.W.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

SIR,—Mr. Donald Cowie, writing on the subject of Australia and New Zealand potatoes and citrus fruit, uses an editorial in the *Christchurch Press* as the basis of his case. This newspaper, which serves a district interested in potato growing, is certainly one of the best of the Conservative dailies, but it has not prevented Mr. Cowie from being wrongly informed. This is, of course, not necessarily Mr. Cowie's fault.

The editorial quoted says: "The argument that free exchange of oranges and potatoes between Australia and New Zealand would involve a spread of plant diseases, never very convincing, was disposed of finally at a conference in Canberra in 1934 between Australian and New Zealand experts."

The facts are as stated in my first letter. In order to prevent the spread of Mediterranean fruit fly and to secure the lifting of the United States embargo on New Zealand fruit, New Zealand, in December, 1932, placed an embargo on Australian fruit. Almost immediately, it was decided to allow quantities of South Australian oranges into New Zealand because that state was free from the fly. In June, 1934, a Conference of Plant Pathologists met in Canberra. Inter alia, they agreed that citrus fruit *grown in certain areas* could be safely shipped, on certification by the State Department of Agriculture that the area *was free from fruit fly*. There were other reservations, but the point is that the possibility of the spread of disease from Australian oranges was definitely recognised by the experts. Since then New Zealand has imported Australian oranges—under safeguards—from areas other than South Australia.

W. B. SUTCH

415 Strand,
London, W.C.2.

ABYSSINIA

SIR,—May I crave the hospitality of your columns to make an appeal to your readers to enrol themselves as members of the Abyssinia Association?

The Governments of the world seem every month to pay less and less regard to the sanctity of International Law, and to be more and more ready to accept the *faits accomplis* which aggression brings about. But it remains true, none the less, that in International Law and in the re-establishment of its binding power there lies the only solid hope of future peace.

There has been more than one attempt to deprive Ethiopia of its rights of representation in the Assembly of the League of Nations in order that Signor Mussolini's delegates may be induced to return. The Abyssinia Association exists to uphold the rights of Ethiopia at Geneva and elsewhere. It has powerful support from leading personalities in this country and abroad. But its work cannot continue effectively unless subscriptions from members, on which it is dependent, can be increased.

The full membership subscription is 10*s.*; Associates, 2*s.* 6*d.* Contributions should be sent to The Honorary Secretary, Abyssinia Association, 144 Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2.

PHILIP NOEL-BAKER,
43 South Eaton Place, S.W.1. Vice-President.

MISS CHARLOTTE YONGE

SIR,—I hope that some other readers of my own generation will be moved to protest against Mr. Raymond Mortimer's treatment of Miss Yonge in your issue of June 19th. He grants, it is true, that she had a remarkable gift for characterisation and a remarkable understanding of children, but this concession is almost lost in his article as a whole, and he considers that "it is the mixture in her works of the morbid and the goody-goody which gives them their peculiar flavour." I cannot admit this for a moment, at any rate as regards the delightful children's books which I have re-read at intervals during some forty-eight years.

"Her morality," writes Mr. Mortimer, "is insistent and characteristic. A child of eleven is destined for the Navy. But in a rash moment he takes some shillings from a money-box and is consequently refused the career on which he had set his heart." (The reference must be to *The Stokesley Secret*.)—"In a rash moment . . ."—this is a highly euphemistic summary of Henry Merrifield's course of escapism, which brought so much suffering to the younger sister on whom he allowed suspicion to rest. Secondly, there was only one cadetship. Does Mr. Mortimer honestly hold that it should have been offered to Henry, to the exclusion of the clumsier elder brother whose sterling qualities had come out in the time of trouble? Thirdly, Henry could not have passed the examination—a point which is made quite clear. "When Sam was knitting his brows frightfully over a sum in proportion, Hal could do it in no time." So he did; but he put the third term first, and multiplied the hours into the minutes . . . so that he made out that 25 men would take longer to cut a field of grass than 3, and then could not see that he was wrong."

"Parents are infallible," says Mr. Mortimer. Captain Merrifield is not made so—he is an impatient sailor, who has done much injustice to Sam through misunderstanding his shyness. In the equally delightful *Countess Kate*, what refreshment we found in the scene near the end where Uncle Giles from India tells all the necessary home truths to Aunt Barbara! Miss Yonge's judgment between children and their elders is exceptionally fair and honest. When a wild little girl has to come to live with great-aunts in a prim London street, the situation is recognised as difficult for everyone, and it is only asked that Kate, as a human

being possessed of reason, should do her best. The scale between her and Lady Barbara is held quite even.

I cannot leave the subject without referring to the historical stories, especially *The Little Duke* and *The Dove in the Eagle's Nest*. It has not become less necessary of late years to remember how, through the courage and gentleness of individuals, a humane civilisation may hold its own or make its way. Miss Yonge's opinions on nineteenth-century questions are not always mine, and this college cherishes a letter of 1868 in which she declines to approve of its foundation. But as a writer for children she stands, I urge, very high indeed. HELEN WODEHOUSE

Girton College, Cambridge.

CHRISTOPHER SPRIGG MEMORIAL

SIR,—May we ask for the hospitality of your columns to bring to your readers' notice an Ambulance Fund which is being raised in memory of Christopher St. John Sprigg, a young poet and novelist who has been killed fighting in Spain with the International Brigade?

Though only 29 years of age, Christopher Sprigg had a remarkable record of literary achievement. He was the author of seven novels of distinction and had also written a number of aviation text-books. His last published work, *Illusion and Reality*, issued posthumously under his pen-name of "Christopher Caudwell," has everywhere been recognised as the most brilliant Marxist analysis of the nature of creative literature ever written in English. Of its young author, *Punch's* reviewer has written:

> This country has lost with "Christopher Caudwell" an original and constructive thinker, and just possibly the human race in an hour of change a potential leader.

A quiet, friendly and cheerful young man, and an active worker on the Peace Council, no one could have dreaded or detested war more than did Christopher Sprigg. But greater still was his devotion to the ideals of democratic freedom, and early last December he left England quietly for Spain, there to enlist as a machine-gunner in the newly formed British Battalion of the International Brigade. He was killed in the defence of Madrid on February 12th, heroically covering the withdrawal of his company from an untenable position on the Valencia Road at the sacrifice of his own life.

The purpose of the Fund now being raised in his memory is to provide an ambulance urgently needed for attachment to the English-speaking battalions of the Spanish People's Army, and it was thought that some of your readers might, perhaps, wish to associate their gifts to the Spanish People's cause with the name of this gallant young English writer who gave up a most promising literary career, and has now given life itself, for that same cause.

Donations—and none can be too small to serve—should be sent to the Fund's Hon. Treasurer, The Viscount Churchill, Christopher Sprigg Memorial Fund, at 24 New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1.

Signed: J. B. PRIESTLEY (Chairman), W. T. LAYTON, ETHEL MANNIN, W. H. AUDEN, D. N. PRITT, JULIAN HUXLEY, HUGH WALPOLE, STORM JAMESON, LEAH MANNING

Christopher Sprigg Memorial Fund, (Hon. Sec.)
London, W.C.1.

CHATHAM HOUSE

SIR,—While cordially agreeing with "Critic's" appreciative description of Chatham House as "one of the few good things that sprang out of the post-war desire to stop the next that has survived and prospered," I would point out that he seems entirely to have misunderstood the nature of Commander King-Hall's appeal and the reasons which prompt it. The necessity for a strictly limited membership—which he rightly emphasises—has been fully recognised since the foundation of the Institute, and I can assure him that there is no thought of departing from this principle. But that is precisely the reason which necessitates the intervention of outside benefactors, if the work, which is increasingly recognised to be of national importance, is to be efficiently carried on. Nothing like as much as is being done at present could possibly have been achieved by the subscriptions of a relatively small body of qualified persons, subscriptions deliberately fixed at a figure low enough to suit the pockets of those who are richer in thought and knowledge on international affairs than in this world's goods. "Critic" cannot be aware how largely the prosperity which he commends is already due to external benefactions. As instances, I may mention the "Annual Survey," endowed by Sir Daniel Stevenson, and a number of publications embodying the results of group study. But "Critic" should be informed that he would not be now enjoying the use of a "Library (which) is now one of the best rooms to work in in London," nor would the Institute now be "Chatham House," but for the great generosity of an admirer—the late Colonel Leonard of Ontario. G. M. GATHORNE-HARDY

MASS-OBSERVATION

SIR,—The following piece of mass-observation may be of interest.

A Bradford business man told me that a friend of his, a schoolmaster, showed him the following essay on "Monday" by a little girl aged eight:—

> Monday is our washing-day. At half-past six Mother gets up, looks out of the window, and if it is fine, she gets dressed and goes downstairs.
>
> If it is wet, she says "bugger it!" and gets back into bed again.

Alwoodley, Leeds. G. I. PETTY

PURCELL'S FATHER

SIR,—Mr. Dennis Arundell questions the authenticity of a letter from Thomas Purcell to John Gostling, first printed in Cummings' *Purcell*. The point is not unimportant, since this letter is the most convincing evidence at present available for my suggestion that Thomas Purcell was the composer's father. The letter, as he says, was formerly in Cummings' possession. When Cummings died his library was sold by auction and this letter and other Purcell items went to Japan. The printed catalogue issued by the Nanki Music Library, Tokio, where they are now housed, may be seen at the British Museum.

I welcome Mr. Arundell's scepticism on principle, but his grounds for suspecting the letter seem to me inadequate. I deal with his points in order: (1) "Chaunter" was the regular word for a precentor at this time. An example will be found in the document from Westminster Abbey printed on pp. 79–80 of my *Purcell*, and I can produce several others with chapter and verse if required. "Mr." was a normal way of referring to a clerk in Holy Orders, if he was not a doctor of divinity. I refer Mr. Arundell to Rimbault's *Cheque Book of the Chapel Royal* for examples. I have others from the Westminster records.

(2) The contraction "ffeb. $\frac{9}{78}$" certainly looks odd, but I should prefer to regard it as a mistake in transcription or a misprint rather than a proof of forgery.

(3) The same comment applies to "reed," which I wrote in full in my copy.

(4) I see nothing alien to the period in the expressions "the enclosed" and "yours of the 4th."

(5) What else would a seventeenth-century father have said but "my sonne is composing"? "Compose" was the normal word for writing music. The construction of "wherein" seems straightforward and natural. The verb "mind" in the sense of "remind" is common at this period; see *O.E.D.*

(6) "Ye" for "you" is clearly another error of transcription. Cummings was not very careful about details of this kind—*e.g.*, his transcription of the preface to the *Sonatas of III Parts* leaves out a whole line of the original, and his quotation from Blow's memorial tablet has "the famous Henry Purcell" instead of "the famous Mr. H. Purcell."

(7) "Perform the compliments" sounds genuine to me. A random search in Pepys discloses "to make their due compliments" and "respectful in their complements [*sic*] and wishes" (*Private Correspondence*, ed. Tanner, vol. i, pp. 226 and 321). Perhaps someone better acquainted with seventeenth-century letter-writing can produce a closer parallel.

(8) I plead guilty to having written a rather careless footnote about "F fa ut" and "E la mi"; but I see no reason why in colloquial use the terms should not stand for the low notes. There is an interesting passage near the beginning of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction*, where the pupil, asked to begin a scale on F at the bottom of the bass stave, does not know what to call it as it stands below Gamut. The teacher explains that the rules apply "as well without the compasse of the Scale, as with"; and the pupil realises that "the first note standeth in *F fa ut*

under *Gam ut*." If we suppose that there had already been some reference to Gostling's low notes there would have been no need to be more precise; just as a composer to-day might write to a *basso profundo* and say "I have written an E for you."

(9) The information contained in the letter is precisely what one might expect and no more. All the subjects mentioned are such as would naturally be discussed between Thomas Purcell and Gostling, and the only individuals referred to are those whom they may both be presumed to have known. Anyone who wanted to give a verisimilitude to a faked letter by introducing historical characters would be far more enterprising than this.

J. A. WESTRUP

[If this correspondence continues it must be in private.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

W. H. HUDSON

SIR,—I am engaged in writing a thesis (Doctorat ès Lettres) on *W. H. Hudson*, the naturalist, and should be grateful if any of your readers who have letters or any other documents by him, or reminiscences of him, would allow me to see them and use them. I shall be in London in the latter half of July; until then, write c/o Mrs. Reynolds, 80 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City.

5 rue Jeanne de Chantal, G. REMORDS, Professeur
Marseille (Bouches du Rhône), France.

Miscellany

SIR JAMES BARRIE

AN obituary notice is not a last assize, nor should it be a funeral oration where only the virtues of the dead are celebrated, but our gratitude should find expression in it. Obituary criticism marks a moment when it is right to remember first what the dead man gave us. In Barrie's case that was delight, and he gave it literally to millions. It was a delight, too, which stimulated kindly emotions, merciful laughter and gay or eerie surprise. Whether or not his work will continue to give this delight to others who come afterwards is a question which cannot be answered, but some of his plays expressed so sensitively and skilfully certain modes of feeling, that whenever these find favour again, Barrie the dramatist is likely to be rediscovered.

He was a master of stage craft. He knew how suggestible an audience is, and better than anyone the liberties which can be taken with impunity once a dramatist has an audience with him. True, he sometimes miscalculated, and oddly enough, he was most apt to do this when he was writing round some actress whose charm he had felt himself profoundly. *Rosy Rapture* which was written for Gaby Deslys was one of his failures; nor can *Alice Sit by the Fire*, written for Ellen Terry, be counted among his successes. In *The Adored One*, written to display Mrs. Patrick Campbell, the scene in the Court of Law was so realistic and Hare's study of the judge so meticulously exact, that the audience, instead of taking lightly as mere phantasy the story of Leonora who pushed a man out of a railway carriage because he refused to shut the window when her little girl was suffering from a cold, smelt blood and were not amused. I remember myself enjoying enormously Hare's little bursts of judicial petulance, and the hesitating dubitative way he passed his hand every now and then across his lips, but the very perfection of his realism made the extravaganza itself seem silly. To my regret, I never saw *The Boy David*, but though the unfavourable reception of it was, I think, largely due to ancillary causes (Barrie was no longer "the adored one"; a reaction had set in), I cannot help suspecting that its failure may have been partly due, perhaps, to his thinking more of exhibiting the charm of Miss Bergner than of his theme. But although occasionally he failed to gauge the extent to which his audience was prepared to yield itself entirely to his intention, no dramatist of his time was more triumphantly successful in bringing off situations divided from failure by the narrowest edge.

Eighteenth-century criticism used to praise authors for their "invention": Barrie possessed that quality in an astonishing degree, and not only in his main fable (*Peter Pan, Dear Brutus, Mary Rose*, plays utterly unlike any which had preceded them) but also in the conduct of more ordinary themes. He could supply at every turn ingenious entertaining incidents which carried the story on imperceptibly, and these often had an air of inconsequence which lent an air of pleasing lightness to his treatment of the theme. His stage technique was extraordinarily supple. He could measure to a hair's breadth the effect of a situation when it is apprehended through the eye as well as through the understanding. He was a producer of genius, and many of his plays grew to be what they were in the course of rehearsal. His instinct for the stage was so sure that he has enlarged its possibilities, gradually making room for his own peculiar imagination, which before his day might well have been considered undramatic. If you read his plays in the order in which they were written, you will find him first applying this sure sense of the stage to the staple kind of story, and of these plays *The Admirable Crichton* is probably the best, though it is not up to *The Twelve Pound Look*, that little one-act masterpiece. Only later did he apply this sense of the stage to peculiar themes, though he by no means altogether abandoned the earlier kind of subject—*Old Friends*, for instance, is a poignant realistic study in fatality, where a tendency to drink, overcome in a man, crops out again in his daughter, but neither *Old Friends* nor *The Will*, nor *Half-an-Hour*, which are all of them extremely adroit examples of dramatic foreshortening in story-telling, possess the qualities which were most original in him. It was easy for critics of the intellectual sort to under-estimate that originality, because in another respect he was the least original of gifted writers. Apart from the shaping power of his imagination and the ingenuity of his stage craft, his criticism of life contained nothing new. No one ever got fresh light on ways and means or on morals from him. Only delightfully odd and some-

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times surprisingly penetrating confirmations of quite ordinary judgments on human nature. No one ever came away from a Barrie play convinced that he had seen the devil's horns sticking up in some *unexpected* quarter, or that he had caught sight for the first time of a reflection of a star in a puddle. His plays did not clear up anything, or even complicate anything. His sense of values seemed on the whole to be that of the gentle nineteenth century novel—fairly sane but often very sentimental. Sometimes there seemed to be a dash of *The Boys' Own Paper* in his point of view. Of course, he was saner than many of the intellectual writers in whose heads a few ideas buzzed as in a vacuum. He stood apart from the intellectual and moral post-Ibsen drama of the early twentieth century. This was a real revival, and the spirit of his plays was tacitly at any rate hostile to it. He was of, and yet also apart from, the popular drama of his times. To those who stopped to ask what he was saying about life, his point of view seemed too nebulous and soft for a sound artist. The background which justified and set off the judgments of men and women implicit in his stage characters, seemed to amount to no more than the suggestion that life was a romantic, straightforward adventure, and to be lived well must be taken as such. Yet that view of life did not seem to be even firmly held, as it was, say, by Stevenson. It had the air of being, if not exactly make-believe, yet something the dramatist was clinging to, because an alternative was too painful to face. What was clear was that the characters to whom his heart went out were those whom he conceived as holding that view with more wholehearted simplicity than he could himself; consequently, he wrote about them very sentimentally. Here lies, perhaps, the explanation of his love of youth, for youth has often the air, superficially, of taking life on trust as a romantic adventure, the explanation of his insight in that direction, and yet the marked limitations of it. This would also account for his sympathetic touch in drawing old people, in whom there is often, if not exactly a second childhood, a second innocence, and granted easy circumstances and peace of heart, a disposition to regard life in retrospect as a simple pretty picture. The sympathy of such old people for the young is a boundless tender admiration, provided the young consent to be figures in that picture, and to remain in it, but woe betide if they do not. His attitude towards them struck me as being a mixture of the blandness of an old man who no longer has any quarrel with life or his own desires, and the enthusiasm of a young girl. But those who remember what it was like to be a boy know that a good deal is left out of such pictures, and not merely harsh facts but all sorts of virtues, inextricably connected with them, indeed the growing principle itself, the sap by virtue of which the creature becomes at last a being looking before and after. A boy is not merely a right, tight little fellow, with nothing incongruous in him except an adorable affectation of premature manliness; youth is essentially the thinking time—if you don't think when you are young you will never think. It is a time of anxious sensitive be-bothered hankering effort to understand and be understood. Later on thinking becomes a mere accomplishment, and friendship an art, only needing a little care and patience, like boiling an egg. It is no longer a personal crucial experiment. Barrie was pre-eminently a dramatist who dealt with youth and its charm, but what many missed in his work was interest in the questing, crude, spring-like temper of growing human beings, which has, if the beauty, also the uncomfortable drizzling rawness of actual springtime. His dramatic world was one in which the most jarring note of all would have been the pathetic, often almost insoluble, conflict between the young and old. He stopped his ears to that, and the public loved him for it. Coleridge, generalising partly from himself, once declared that every genius was half a woman. Barrie was part woman, part leprechaun, and part boy, the masculine element was almost entirely absent from his genius. His femininity enabled him to draw women with a simple subtlety which was remarkable, and if the bull may be permitted, sometimes with a merciless sympathy. Perhaps this characteristic is also responsible for the ambiguity of his attitude towards life: the desire somehow to have things both ways—to respond to life as though it justified the most romantic trust, and yet the next moment to see it with acute and merciless matter-of-factness; to touch the consolations of the mystic, not through faith or intuition, but through sentiment, and to believe in the wisdom of pretending. As a dramatist he was never more deft than in handling emotional ambiguity. How ambiguous, when you come to think of it, *Mary Rose* really is. It can be taken as fantasy, or it can be taken seriously. It plays up to a desire to take fairyland religiously, or religion wistfully, as though religion, too, were a fairy story; an attitude unsympathetic to many to-day. But what masterstrokes of stage-craft many scenes in that play are! Barrie was the only contemporary dramatist, with the exception of Maeterlinck, who could touch us with a ghostly finger.

Yet how oddly merciless some of its passages are! The return of Mary Rose herself to life is more poignant than her death; those she loved seemed dead to her, and to them she was far more real as a memory than alive. What a satire on those who are firmly convinced that if only the dead returned to them they would be happy. Perhaps the controlling faculty of Barrie's invention was an extreme tenderness, which often lapsed into a sentimentality that made one positively uncomfortable, but which also enabled him to handle ugly facts—for instance, human forgetfulness, which in the hands of another would have hurt. His audience took from him things which they would have taken from no other dramatist without wincing; and the extraordinary thing about his technique was that his bitter and his sweet were not mingled after the ordinary fashion. It was not a case of administering powder in jam, but by means of some subtlety of feeling, due I think to that tenderness of nature, he made the powder itself taste sweet. It was a faithless world to which Mary Rose returned, but he had reminded us indirectly that the dead who die young at least never grow old; that for us they still remain like his heroine radiantly young. This was perhaps the profoundest emotion the play conveyed.

Barrie was a writer easy to take to pieces, but difficult to put together again. He wrote out of himself, out of his own emotional ambiguities, and a need for sympathy which he often showed too much. He was a man in whom that need and all the weakness, all the graces, all the insight it implies, was exceptionally marked. DESMOND MACCARTHY

MUSICAL REPRODUCTION

WHAT word are we to use which will be least misleading when applied to musicians who are not the composers of the works they perform? In England, we are accustomed to call such reproducing musicians "executants" and foreigners, make much fun out of our use of the word "executant," considering that it is in many cases extremely apt in its application. The fact that almost nine times out of ten a work is left dead when it is executed, makes one chary of using it. The word in use in Mozart's day and generally in the eighteenth century, which saw the rise of what I shall call the reproducing musician, was virtuoso. If you look at any original opera programme of that period you will find that the singers are designated as virtuoso or virtuosa di camera and virtuoso was the right word for the highly gifted and trained musician who had become a specialist in performing all kinds of music written by others.

That the division should have come first in opera and with the development of the orchestra was natural, for no composer could be expected to perform his own opera or symphony. But in the eighteenth century the great composers were also frequently virtuosos on a particular instrument. For Mozart and Beethoven it was the pianoforte, but Beethoven ceased to play as a virtuoso long before he died and Mozart's inclination was to compose rather than to perform. Both, however, only played their own compositions in the latter part of their

lives so that except in their early youth they could not be described as reproducing musicians. The reproducing musician or virtuoso has steadily increased in numbers and importance during the nineteenth century. If in singing there has been a decline in virtuosity this is certainly not true of instrumental music. On the contrary, I should doubt whether in the past there has ever been in instrumental music such a high level of virtuosity as exists now.

In my opinion we have living at the present day two reproducing musicians, each of whom is supreme in his particular field: Schnabel and Toscanini. One cannot imagine virtuosity going beyond what these two musicians have achieved, but that is not to say that either of them is quite perfect. Luckily perfection is not an ideal that can be achieved by a living artist or in a living work of art. Each of these two great reproducing musicians has defects and, comically enough, these defects are often all that inferior musicians can perceive in their work. Prestige in each case has overborne opposition, but opposition there has been and still is in plenty; it is the opposition of musicians or amateurs inadequately equipped by talent, experience or instinct to distinguish the important from the unimportant, and the more valuable from the less valuable. What is the quality which above all others distinguishes the musical reproduction given by Schnabel and Toscanini from that of lesser though often highly gifted musicians? It may be briefly stated that in both cases we feel we are getting the work presented to us more nearly as the composer conceived it than ever before. The music is realised—*materialised* is perhaps the better word—more exactly and thoroughly. Now we all know that this is not merely a matter of the accurate playing of the composer's notes and markings. It is first of all a matter of musical instinct and musical comprehension. Nobody who ever wrote poetry worth reading or music worth hearing wrote so that he who runs may read. The simplest sentence, such as: "Let there be light!" varies in its significance enormously according to its context, and to the content it had for the writer and the capacity of the mind of the hearer to comprehend in all its fullness what was meant. The excellent analyses by Mr. William Empson of the layers of association which, like so many skins of an onion, can be taken from a single epithet in a line of verse, have helped some readers to understand more clearly the complexity of effect aimed at and achieved in good poetry. The same is true of music.

Two pianists may play all the notes of a sonata fairly accurately, but one may play from a full mind and the other from an empty mind, with enormously different results. And I am speaking chiefly of *musical* fullness of mind. That a musician is also a philosopher, a collector of postage stamps, a reader of Goethe or Shakespeare or Plato or Schopenhauer, has no effect whatever in increasing his *musical* understanding. This musicality of intellect is a pure gift which may be developed only by musical and not by any other experience. Now in this respect Toscanini and Schnabel are simply tremendous and *hors concours*, although I think Schnabel's the more profoundly musical mind of the two. But this is not to say that character and personality do not enter into it at all. They do, but only by means of the purely musical gift upon which they are always dependent. If I have a criticism to make of Toscanini it is that he gives one the impression of being too musically materialistic and a little impervious to some of the subtlest and higher musical values. Rhythm is more important to him than tone. Now I am the last to decry the importance of rhythm. It is all-important. It is Toscanini's marvellous sense of rhythm which makes his performances so vital, but there is also tone. And tone is more mysterious than rhythm.

Schnabel has rhythm like Toscanini, but he has also a sense of tone such as I have never experienced from any other reproducing musician. Has one ever heard Toscanini extract from orchestral tone the wonders which Schnabel has extracted from pianoforte tone? I never have and I should like to hear the opinion of other musicians capable of judging these matters upon the subject. It is, in my opinion, Toscanini's deficiency in this respect that enables him to play such music as the Tommassini Variations, the Respighi-Bach Passacaglia in C minor and the Sibelius *En Saga* with the same enthusiasm and effect as, for example, Mozart's G minor symphony. And was it not enlightening that in the Mozart symphony the most convincing part was the performance of the contrapuntal last movement in which clarity and rhythm are more important than a profound and delicate sense of tone relations?

W. J. TURNER

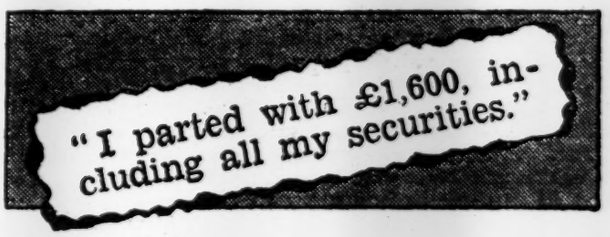
PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Great Romancer," at the New

This romantic and comic dramatisation of the life of Alexandre Dumas père is admirably acted and well produced. Considerable liberties are taken with history but, as the author claims, his hero did much the same sort of thing. The play is rather a rambling affair and consists of the quarrel between Hugo and his ghosts, his desertion by two actress mistresses and a wife, and his final poverty. Dumas was heartily played by Robert Morley. He was made rather a stock figure. Prolific writers are surely not *always* loudly vital, over-generous, grotesque, sentimental and deceived by their best friends. And surely Alfred de Vigny never played the part of admiring bloodless foil to Dumas. Vivienne Bennett was brilliant as Marie Dorval. She was given little to do except be charming and succeeded in getting an attractive human being on to the stage. Every curtain in this play came down on an epigram or a "strong situation." One was left at the end feeling that the only reason why it had all been fairly enjoyable was the acting.

"Satyr," at the Shaftesbury

"Ces nymphes je les veux perpétuer." Like Mallarmé's faun, and Fainall in *The Way of the World*, the hero of this play was "born with budding antlers like a young Satyre." Unluckily his method of perpetuating nymphs was to rape and murder them. He inaugurates his campaign at New Orleans, whereupon his mother and her old flame, a tippling medico,



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conceal the fact and move him to New York, where the boy is soon up to his old tricks again. In the circumstances they might, you think, give him at least an attendant, but they choose not even to employ a manservant, to answer the door themselves and to live on the ground floor, so that every opportunity can be given to the boy for his quiet fun. There is material for a play in the contest between maternal feelings and the common sense which would see that such a son must be segregated. But the author has preferred to concentrate on the merely sensational aspect of the situation, showing us the boy making up to his little victims, while the mother first registers anguish, then conveniently absents herself. The story is incredible, the treatment quite undistinguished, and the effect mere Grand Guignol. We sat the play out because the boy's part was in the hands of Mr. Marius Goring. He played up the Faun business without being arch or whimsical—an astonishing feat. Indeed, his sensitive and intellectual performance almost made us believe in this preposterous narrative. There is no young actor in England whom we would rather see. Miss Flora Robson, whom we were thankful to welcome back to the stage, had the unrewarding role of the mother, which she played with admirable restraint. (There is no greater mistake for young actresses than to refuse parts which are unworthy of them. You do not learn your job by waiting at home, or even at the Ivy, for managers to offer you Cleopatra, Hedda Gabler and Madame Ranevsky.) An American *ingénue* was altogether too ingenuous; the rest of the cast was efficient. The difficulties of the actors were gratuitously aggravated by a long Lady Macbeth staircase, up which they had to keep making interminable exits.

"Victorian Life," at the Leicester Galleries.

This is a most entertaining exhibition of pictures and drawings illustrating Victorian goings-on—the Queen, her husband and her children, the Great Exhibition, railway trains and London streets and the seaside, listening to sermons and music-hall singers, in fact all the nicer aspects of the life of the time. A Golden Age it now seems to many people, prosperous, pacific and unharassed, and the painters then very rarely looked at the victims of current industrialism in their fetid dens. But it was not a Golden Age of art. Constable died in the year of the Queen's accession. The eighteenth century tradition survived, dwindling into increasing feebleness till it finally vanished strangled by pre-Raphaelitism and the coloured daguerrotypes of the Royal Academy. The Leicester Galleries exhibition shows very clearly the two streams running side by side till the vulgarity of the Nineteenth Century public procured the survival only of the unfittest. Cruikshank gives way to the rather less admirable Keene, Keene to the entirely unadmirable du Maurier. Wilkie and Leech (here represented by an excellent oil-painting) are replaced by Collinsons and Rossiters, Maw Egleys and Augustus Eggs. Not till the Nineties did English painting suddenly perk up again with Walter Sickert. There was also that curious and uneven Sunday painter Walter Greaves, who has two good pictures here. Otherwise the most pleasing pictures in this exhibition are by Woolmer (this is a pale but honourable reflection of Rubens), by Ernest Crofts, by George Elgar Hicks and by Landseer. It is humiliating to think of what was happening during the same period on the other side of the Channel. But the Leicester Galleries, as if to soothe our national pride, has included a number of paintings by Tissot, who was a Frenchman, and who competes in vulgarity of sentiment and insensibility of handling with the basest of the native Victorians. Compare him with Pingret, the cold but tasteful Court-painter of Louis-Philippe, and you perceive that French painting declined into illiteracy as conspicuously as ours—but not, of course, as unanimously. So little so, indeed, that the Nineteenth Century is now christened *Le Grand Siècle* of French painting. But this is an exhibition, admirably arranged, of Victorian life, not Victorian art, and will enchant you if you can manage to look at it quite unaesthetically.

"Orphée," at Covent Garden

Gluck's opera which, in its original version, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, was produced in Vienna in 1762 and revised for Paris in 1774, is a work which calls for a designer and producer of genius to do it justice. We have never seen a satisfactory production, but the present one at Covent Garden has certain merits. The scenery and costumes by Dr. Emil Preetorius are not without taste, but have no unity of style, for he has not quite succeeded in fusing the classicism of his costumes, and some of his scenes with the Turneresque Claudian landscape and nineteenth-century rocky romanticism of others. The French version with the substitution of the tenor instead of the contralto Orpheus has been adopted but, unfortunately, Orphée is a very exacting role for the tenor and M. Burdino did not satisfy, either as regards quality of voice or accuracy of intonation, the demands we must make on the singer who takes the part. Miss Maggie Teyte was more satisfactory as Euridice. It was a mistake to omit the final chorus before the concluding ballet, for it leaves the action of the opera suspended in the air. The ballet was well done and the orchestra played well under Fritz Reiner. The quality of the music in *Orphée* is so superior, so fine and unique, that even an imperfect production cannot detract from its impressiveness.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, June 25th—
- Debate on "Trotskyism." R. Hansa *v.* E. Boden. Friars Hall, Blackfriars Road, 8.
- League of Coloured Peoples Conference, Memorial Hall, 8. Till June 27th. For particulars ring CEN 8597.

SATURDAY, June 26th—
- Eurhythmics by Boys and Girls of the Caldecott Community and Dalcroze Graduates, The Ring, Blackfriars, 2.30 and 8.30. Tickets 5*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.*
- Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R., Week-end School, Digswell Park, Welwyn Garden City. And on June 27th.

SUNDAY, June 27th—
- Prof. J. C. Flugel on "Examinations Examined," Conway Hall, 11.
- "Tsar Lenin," Stage Society Production, Westminster. 8.30.

TUESDAY, June 29th—
- William F. Nicholson on "Ten Years of Lunch Hour Addresses: A Survey of Internationalism," Friends House, 1.20.
- Victor Gollancz, Harry Pollitt and Gilbert Jameson on "The Future of Democracy," Hampstead Town Hall, 8.
- "Housemaster," Aldwych.

WEDNESDAY, June 30th—
- Dr. Gooch and Miss Eleanor Rathbone on "Spain and Peace," Hampstead Town Hall, 8.15.
- "No Sleep for the Wicked," Daly's.

THURSDAY, July 1st—
- "Ballets Russes," Covent Garden Opera House.

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MACMILLAN

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THREE POEMS

BY LYTTON STRACHEY

[Lytton Strachey, who was born in 1880, began to write verse at the age of seven, and continued to do so throughout his life. The first of the poems printed here is dated 1905, the second 1906-1908, the third 1915.]

THE TWO TRIUMPHS

'Tis true that I have never touched your hair ;
Perhaps, indeed, 'tis not for me to touch.
He touches it ; but then he does not care.
I touch it not ; but then I care so much.
In this wrong world was it not always so
Since Adam plucked our deep-desirèd woe ?

Why do you let him love you ? Why not me ?
Am I less worthy ? Ah ! That I am more
Is why I still must lose you, and why he
May taste the sweet fruit to the bitter core.
So from great Moses was the promised ground
Exhibited, which little Joshua found.

Yet listen ; you are mine in his despite.
Who shall dare say his triumph mine prevents ?
My love is the established infinite,
And all his kisses are but accidents.
His earth, his heaven, shall wither and decay
To naught : my love shall never pass away.

For, as in mummied sepulchre unseen
The planted grass Osiris' name expressed,
So shall my love's dim seed with living green
Inform at last your mortuary breast ;
And in your sealed-up heart there shall be read
The mystic resurrection of the dead.

THE HASCHISH

Oh, let me dream, and let me know no more
The sun's harsh sight and life's discordant roar ;
Let me eclipse my being in a swoon,
And, lingering through a long penumbral noon,
Feel like a ghost a soft Elysian balm,
A universe of amaranthine calm,
Devoid of thought, forgetful of desire,
And quiet as joined hearts where still suspire
Love's ultimate tendernesses, while faint bliss
With pale mandragora drowns the accomplished kiss !
So shall I find, inextricably sweet,
The phantom realm where all vagaries meet,
Where strangest visions unreluctant rise,
And wonder's self's oblivious of surprise.
There lost among impossibles I'll rest,
Ambiguousness shall lull me on her breast,
And heavenliest contradictions soothe my sense
And fold my soul in soft inconsequence.
Confused, I'll vaguely taste and strangely hear,
Feel with the eye, and whisper with the ear,
And half experience and half surmise,
Imagine, and remember, and improvise,
And laugh with melancholy, and just weep,
And dwindle through infinitudes of sleep.
Ah ! Ah ! To swoon away beyond the touch
Of this wrong world's too little or too much,
To melt ineffably, and gradually find
Far more enchantments for the fading mind
Than poets ever wot of—starry showers
Of magical smells distilled from unknown flowers,
Blushes of angels, immanence of eyes,
Smiles from the moon, faint jewels, fairy sighs,
Aerial oceans, and liquid halls
And Virgil murmuring from the virginals !
Oh soft ! Oh delicate, and sweetly wound
Into one substance with the calm profound
Of visionary being ! All my thought,
As heavy incense wanders into nought,
In hanging dissipation drifts and dies
Through subtle and through mystic harmonies,
Where vague remembrance finds delicious fare
—Looks that are felt, and lusts as light as air,
And curious embraces like September flowers
Vanishing down interminable hours,
And love's last kiss, exquisitely withdrawn,
And copulations dimmer than the dawn.
Who now shall fret ? Who now shall strive and smart,
When swimming ease buoys up the unloaded heart,
When the freed soul explores unending rest,
And wrapped in wonders, infinitely blest,
Divines through worlds of glory vanishing wings,
And moves ecstatic towards immortal things
—Embodied sounds more pure than e'er could flow
From Palestrina joined with Angelo ?
This is the happy end, the promised peace !
Divine Giorgione glows o'er more than Greece,
And in warm shadows nectared fountains fall,
And changing music trembles over all—
Enormous music, swooning over shores
Drowned in autumnal grandeur, till the doors
Of remote heaven swing round on oilèd hinge
Enchanted, and the faint evasive fringe
Of all occult and unimagined joys
Waves into vision—forms of golden boys
Embraced seraphically in far lands
By languid lovers, linking marvellous hands
With early virgins crowned with quiet wreaths
Of lily, frailer than the air that breathes
The memory of Sappho all day long
Through Lesbian shades of fragmentary song,
Immortal, holy, dim, dim, holy, lost
Infinitely in dreams emmeshed and crossed
By fluctuating nothings, where the deep
Strange soul dissolved in alabaster sleep
Melts slowly and beautifully, even as mine own,
Half echoing and forgetting loves long known
And long forbidden, fades through dreamy streams
Dreaming, and, dreaming, dreams of dreamier dreams
—Dreams that mysteriously themselves enlace
With Archipiada's—Archipiada's—face.

HAPPINESS

Sometimes it befalls that ruthless chance
Relents, and in the swiftly-gliding dance
Of life's strange atoms wields a wand benign
And waves them marvellously to combine.
Most happy, happy fortune ! Oftenest known
To those in whom the waiting soul has grown

A little weary, and whose deep desires
(As in black coal sleep unextinguished fires)
All joy's rich possibilities ignore,
And, not despairing, yet expect no more.
Ah then, when haply on the listless ear
Insidious music murmurs and draws near,
And knocks, and pleads, and will not be denied,
Until the spirit's portals opening wide
Admit voluminous harmonies enwound
With long triumphant mysteries of sound,
—Or when, upon a sudden, in a breath,
Like a soul caught from out the lap of Death,
A secret silence, for a second's space,
Lives, and reveals a heaven in a face,
—Then, then, like the remote dissolving snow
In Spring-warmed Alpine vales, begin to flow
The softly-trickling rivulets of delight,
Scarce felt at first, but with a gathering might
Hurrying, and the urgent torrents press and pour
In multitudinous gladness, more and more,
And join, and spread, till lo !—deep, calm, and strong,
Beatitude's full flood is rolled along.
Then Time, with indrawn breath, stands still, and smiles ;
And, like a vast soap-bubble that beguiles
With gilded nothingness destruction's power,
Quivering and safe hangs the miraculous hour.
And oh ! then gently, with familiar art,
Through the swooned brain and the enchanted heart,
Pale Passion weaves her way, while over all
Tears shed from inaccessible glories fall.

PARIS

The Spirit of Paris. By Paul Cohen-Portheim. *Batsford.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Though less good than *The Spirit of London*, the author's discoveries being less surprising and his sense of French character less subtle than his sense of English, this is a very good book. "When he (the visitor) suddenly notices the infallible taste with which the flower-girl has arranged the masses of blooms on her barrow, the movement of the woman in the box as she lets the cloak slip from her shoulders, the walk of the mannequin coming out of Paquin's door, the crocheted woollen collars of the working women, the gesticulations of the men gossiping outside the *marchand de vin*, the chauffeur calmly lighting a cigarette in the midst of the most frightful traffic . . ." he will begin to form a definite picture of Paris. These are the observations of a highly intelligent and acute observer; and the photographs which accompany and support them, though again less distinguished than those which illustrate *The Spirit of London*, are cleverly chosen and admirably reproduced. The more pity, therefore, that the author should fall occasionally into the manner of the charming cicerone—"Such is the house of Mme. de Sévigné (who wrote such a lot of letters)"; that his conclusion should be tendentious and a little absurd; and that he should encourage the Louvre officials in their notions that it is nobler to contemplate the muck of ages than the paint of masters, and that good pictures look best in the dark. Which notwithstanding, this is an excellent book. I have caught the author in but one positive error: "the Press apart from Paris papers carries absolutely no weight." This is not true. When it was written, in 1930, *La Dépêche de Toulouse* carried immense weight, and I believe it does so still.

Post-war Paris was Mr. Cohen-Portheim's Paris. It is also mine, but it is not the Paris of my dreams. Places that made a thrilling impression on us in our most impressionable years, between eighteen and twenty-five—Paris, London, Rome, Oxford, Cambridge, spring to the mind—exist most affectingly in our memories as we first knew and felt them. However much we may love and enjoy the contemporary aspect, it is the remembered that is our private and cherished property. This makes *laudatores temporis acti* of us all, but it need not make us silly. And Mr. Cohen-Portheim's book has had on me the salutary effect of making me feel not how much but how comparatively little Paris has changed. The grumpy old Englishman who returns to the little *bistrot* where he ate so well in the days of President Loubet, and finds it transformed to a lamentable *prix fixe* establishment, should not blame Paris. Round the corner probably is a new *bistrot* where one eats as well as ever. It is senseless to drop into a café on the *grands boulevards*, where cafés have been standardised and assimilated to tea-shops, and expect to catch sight of Ernest La Jeunesse or Willy's stove-pipe hat, but there are still *terrasses* where a citizen can take his Pernod and read *Le Temps* and point out Derain's pipe or Picasso's big dog and watch the world go by without being hustled or deafened. I can still return before midnight to my lodging, not ten minutes from the Louvre, and find the provincial streets empty of all save an old gentleman with a red rosette trying to persuade his dog to *prendre ses précautions*. If Villon was right in holding that "*il n'est bon bec que de Paris*," times have certainly changed, and for the better. But, as photographs in this book show, *midinettes* are just as appetising as they were in the days of Gavarni. It is a mistake to suppose that because we have grown old Paris has grown grey. And when George Moore wrote an essay to prove that it had, he proved nothing except that he did not know French.

The Paris of my memories, the Paris I first knew about 1903, was still the Impressionists' Paris, the town and suburbs that Manet and Monet, Renoir, Sisley and Pissarro painted. Men were still bearded mostly, women waisted and big-hatted, "toppers" were prevalent, there were very few motors and no "taxis." Cab-drivers wore shiny hats and drove yellow *fiacres*, and if you were knowing enough to recognise the lamp-colours which indicated their headquarters, you could, towards two in the morning on the boulevards, bargain with a driver whose *remise* lay in your direction and get a lift to Montparnasse (green was the colour) for a franc. Montparnasse, where I lived, was not then the painters' quarter *par excellence*: it boasted only two cafés of renown—*La Closerie des Lilas* and the *Versailles*, with the famous restaurant Lavenue *en face*, and was remarkable chiefly for its exalted terminal station from which I once saw a locomotive precipitate itself into the *place* below. It was a provincial quarter where French was still spoken.

Mr. Cohen-Portheim does well to insist on the fact that Paris is composed for the most part of distinct provincial towns by or through which the main roads pass much as they do in the country. This was more apparent at the beginning of the century, though perhaps hardly more true. The quarters were self-contained and self-sufficing; they had character and accent of their own, and exogamy was discouraged. To go from Montparnasse to Montmartre was to make a little expedition comparable with going from Paris to Fontainebleau nowadays. One lunched betimes, walked across the Luxembourg gardens, and took the Odéon-Clichy omnibus drawn by three grey horses abreast. The journey took an hour, and one got a fine view of Paris from the uncovered *impériale*. This Paris was dominated by the Panthéon and the Eiffel Tower, for that bit of bogus Byzantine on Montmartre, though building, was not yet indecently exposed. One went to Montmartre occasionally, to laugh at Arnold Bennett and see the painters; their paintings one saw in the rue Lafitte—no one had heard of the rue de La Boétie. Also one went sometimes at night to the *Boîte à Fursy* or Lautrec's *Moulin Rouge*; but the centre of "night-life" was still the *grands boulevards*. Shall I give a touch of absurdity to the picture by adding that I have lunched chez Paillard wearing a *Lavalliére*?

All this sounds sufficiently remote from the Paris of to-day, and yet I believe that Mr. Cohen-Portheim is right in maintaining that Paris has changed little, and that the spirit of Paris, which is after all the subject of his book, has changed hardly at all. What has changed is the Paris that catches the eye—the buildings in the main thoroughfares, the shops in those buildings and the vehicles in those thoroughfares, the dress and deportment, to some extent the habits and ideas, of the people who frequent them. There is a Paris which changes every twenty-five years or so. It is well enough off, intelligent on the whole, moderately educated and intensely cosmopolitan. For the last twenty it has been sufficiently alert to take tips from Cocteau, to admire Picasso, to haunt the Russian ballet and attend Jouvet's first nights. This is not bad, and I am only afraid that it may be inclining to admire Dali and take tips from Heaven knows whom—Aragon perhaps. It is not a despicable society in the least, but it is not the essential Paris. It catches the eye, however. So do those vast industrial *banlieues*, where change is rife and desire for change passionate; but for all their populousness and clamour these are not the heart of Paris either.

The spirit of Paris dwells, if I mistake not, in those innumerable little streets where innumerable artisans, single-handed or more often with a wife, a child and an assistant, ply their trades and

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mind their shops, and in those acres of hideous little villas where the same people, after forty years of ceaseless labour, retire to plant their cabbages and die. In Mr. Cohen-Portheim's opinion such people still live as they lived in 1830; and they, the inconspicuous *petits bourgeois*, are the typical Parisiens. What is more, they and their country counterparts, the peasants, are the essential French. The cosmopolitan culture and the industrial *banlieues* are what catch the eye of old gentlemen at the *Institut*, causing them to shake their heads and babble of barbarian invasions and Sodom and Gomorrah, and they catch the eyes of eager young people newly arrived from Cracow and Prague who proclaim incontinently that they are about to build the new Jerusalem on the banks of the Seine. But the Seine flows on, and so does Paris: *fluctuat nec mergitur*.

CLIVE BELL

THE FAIRLY MODERN MIND

The Modern Mind. By MICHAEL ROBERTS. *Faber and Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This book deals with matters of more permanent interest than one would expect from its title. I had expected it to begin with Marx and Freud, but found, to my great relief, that it begins with Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham. These three men all suffered misfortunes which arouse sympathy. Roger Bacon was sent to prison for using experiments in his lectures at Oxford—at any rate, this seems to be the gravest matter laid to his charge, and his imprisonment is certain though his crime is somewhat doubtful. Duns Scotus, who probably had at least as good a philosophical brain as any man now living, became the eponymous hero of all dunces. Of William of Ockham, the most that any general reader knows is his razor, which he did not invent—it is one of the famous historical myths, like "up, Guards, and at 'em" and "here I stand, I can no other." What did happen to him was to get into trouble for writing pamphlets defending the Kaiser. When I once, as a pilgrim, visited the village of Ockham, I found no one except the clergyman who was aware that it had produced a great man.

What Mr. Roberts has to say about these three men is good. They prove, as he points out, that even at the height of scholasticism, philosophers in the British Isles already showed an inclination towards empiricism. They do not, however, since they wrote in Latin, bear on the main subject of the book, which is stated to be "some changes in the use of the English language; in particular . . . the influence of material science on common speech, and . . . the effects of these changes on our attitude to religion, poetry, and science itself." The most interesting part of the book, to my mind, is the chapter on materialism and scientific language in the seventeenth century. He quotes from Thomas Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* (1667) which says that the habit of using metaphors "may be placed amongst those *general mischiefs*, such as the *dissention* of Christian Princes, the *want of practice* in Religion, and the like, which have been so long spoken against that men are become insensible about them." The Royal Society, he says, "have exacted from their members a close, naked, natural way of speaking, positive expressions, clear senses, a native easiness, bringing all things as near the mathematical plainness as they can, and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that of Wits and Scholars."

Mr. Roberts infers that science had a great deal to do with the linguistic difference between the first and second halves of the seventeenth century in England. "Between 1640 and 1680," he says, "the language became a more exact and logical instrument, and the change was the result of conscious and deliberate effort. Hobbes . . . complained that 'There be so many words in use at this day in the English tongue, that though of magnifique sound, yet (like the windy blisters of a troubled water) have no sense at all.'" And so poetry declined and prose improved. But although science indubitably contributed to this result, I think Continental literature shows that this cause was less potent than the study of England alone would lead one to suppose. Consider the difference between Dante and Machiavelli in point of style: it is of just the same sort as the change in seventeenth-century England, but can hardly have been caused by science. The change in French style, which is much later than the Italian but earlier than the English, might perhaps be attributed to science; but even there the exactly parallel changes in architecture suggest the importance of other causes.

All that Mr. Roberts has to say on language is interesting, but in his later chapters, on modern philosophy and science, there is not much that is original. Modern intellectuals, with sadly few exceptions, are divided among three orthodoxies: the Marxist, the Fascist (not much represented in this country), and the theological Liberal. Mr. Roberts belongs to the third group. He accepts the theological interpretations of quantum theory, and has sympathy with vitalism in biology. He thinks that religion and science, rightly understood, cannot conflict, since they belong to different realms; he suggests that religion has poetic truth, which is something different from scientific truth (though he makes the proviso that God must not be put on a level with Father Christmas). Those who, under the influence of Christian teaching, believe that the soul continues to exist after death, have (if I have not misunderstood him) failed to grasp what is meant by "eternal life"; this means (as many have taught) not a persistence throughout the future, but a timeless being, such as (in a Platonic view) belongs to the multiplication table, I doubt whether this doctrine, if it could be understood, would be found as comforting as the popular doctrine of survival, especially in view of the fact that the same kind of timeless being must, if allowed to the soul, be accorded to every possible subject of discourse. The doctrine of a timeless eternal life will always be popularly misinterpreted as survival, and is valuable to the churches largely because of the certainty of this misinterpretation. Thus "poetic truth" for the few means prosaic falsehood for the many. Perhaps the same may be said of "scientific truth," since it is abstruse and not intelligible to the multitude. But at least men of science do their best to be understood, and do not deliberately employ phrases which serve their purpose only because those who use them can be certain of being thought to mean something that, on solemn occasions, they say they do not mean.

The subject of Mr. Roberts's book, namely the influence of science or language, is an interesting one, and so long as he is dealing with this subject what he has to say is well worth reading. But there is too much of general philosophy, and a somewhat too facile acceptance of the interpretations of science which are favoured by the school to which the author belongs. The consequence is that, in spite of much that is excellent, the book as a whole is unequal and lacking in unity.

BERTRAND RUSSELL

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A year ago *Murder off Miami* (a detective story in the form of a dossier, illuminated by photographs and enhanced by small solid objects) made a splash in the stagnant waters of detective fiction. The ripples extended to 100,000 copies sold in the English-speaking world, but the pond remains obstinately unoxygenated and almost impotable. Messrs. Wheatley and Links who threw the first stone have now thrown a second, which should make even a bigger splash than its predecessor. *Who Killed Robert Prentice?* in format follows *Murder off Miami* closely: the dossier consists of typescript, newspaper cuttings, autograph letters and photographs—and the solid objects in cellophane envelopes are (1) the return half of a railway ticket, (2) a foreign postage stamp, and (3) the torn fragments of a photo, which will repay the mild effort of reconstruction. On the cartridge-paper cover we overhear a conversation between Mr. Wheatley and Mr. Links, which leads one to suppose that the problem posed by the dossier will be somewhat different (in *Murder off Miami* the reader was furnished

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with the data which enabled Lieutenant Schwab to order an arrest), but the difference is only in a minor matter of how the evidence is presented; the problem in this case is just "who killed Robert Prentice?" with an additional puzzle at the very end for readers who fancy themselves on their psychology—"why did the killer behave in that way?" This last conundrum stumped me completely, because I wrongly imagined there must be *some* limit to Mr. Wheatley's ingenuity. When the third dossier by these formidable authors appears, which I am glad to see they have already promised, I shall be better armed for my solution, now I realise that Mr. Wheatley is a Habakkuk—*capable de tout*. But before I proceed, I must tell all readers of The New Statesman and Nation with any glimmering of a detective instinct that they will be mad if they do not buy *Who Killed Robert Prentice?* at once. If they wait to borrow or steal a copy someone is bound to start discussing the plot with them and ruining their potential enjoyment. I can hardly refrain from doing so myself. But there is one comment I can safely make, and one criticism that I must risk. These dossiers are so soundly constructed and fairly presented that it is hard to conceal the criminal. That is a comment not a criticism, because one's fun is not in the least impaired by finding that one has deduced aright. My criticism is that one feature of the solution depends on something that I know by personal experience to be a physical impossibility, and I do not think this will trouble more than one reader in ten thousand, because it is a mere fluke that I happen to have this special knowledge.

Busman's Honeymoon is a very different kettle of fish to *Who Killed Robert Prentice?* Miss Sayers made her bed in *Gaudy Night* and on Lord Peter's honeymoon naturally she must lie in it. She does so with indescribable gusto throughout a long stretch of 446 pages. The quotations from Elizabethan poets and dramatists that used to head the chapters have shamelessly jumped between the sheets. Lord Peter and his Harriet in their intimate relations as husband and wife rely for inter-communication almost entirely on more or less apposite quotation from their dippings into English literature. I have never understood why authors imagine that a habit of quotation is such a charming characteristic. Occasionally one meets in real life somebody who only responds to life with the sayings of Doctor Johnson or a collection of tags from Horace. Such persons stamp themselves at once as chronic, dead-alive bores. But in fiction they lay claim to be witty, lively and intelligent by their well-memorised erudition, and I can't understand how authors manage the transfiguration. Cutting out the Dictionary of Quotations in *Busman's Honeymoon*, we are left with a crime and some character sketches of English village society. I feel unqualified to judge Miss Sayers as a novelist, but the detective plot in her latest work is weak; the criminal betrays himself at once by Miss Sayers' dislike of him, in striking contrast to her maternal affection for her other characters; and the mechanism of the crime is as far-fetched as that which strained our credulity in *The Nine Tailors*.

The late J. S. Fletcher died leaving a detective story half-written. The book has been completed by Torquemada and now appears as *Todmanhawe Grange*, a tale of murder in the Yorkshire dales. Workmanlike plots and unpretentious writing were characteristic of Fletcher, and his final contribution to detection is a sound, if borrowed, theme quietly treated and modestly concluded, which some of us may be old-fashioned enough still to appreciate.

The Baron Von Kaz is a highly artificial detective and the Teilhets do not worry themselves with the plausibilities of life provided they can work up excitement and postpone the climax of the solution. In *The Crimson Hair Murders* the strings on which the characters dangle are being pulled all too clearly from the flies, and the reader may be forgiven a little human resentment at being treated himself like a puppet by these relentless manipulators. Unfortunately for their mystery, the intention to baffle the audience is so unblushing that they betray their criminal by their antics, and prolong the anti-climax by their refusal to admit that they have let their secret out. Two books in six months is fast work—perhaps too fast, even for the Teilhets.

Mr. Daly King has set his obelists going again in *Careless Corpse*, this time on an island up the Hudson river insulated from the outer world by ice-floes and fog. As a scientist Mr. King always conducts his detective experiments in conditions which eliminate outside interference. I have nothing but praise for that, but inside interference is just as bad as the other, and Mr. King does not hesitate to juggle with the laws of chemistry to get his desired results. Admittedly he begs the reader's pardon for his jugglery in a note at the conclusion of the book, but why should we forgive him? Without the bogus chemistry the plot is too thin and transparent; with it, it becomes just silly.

The Affair of the Scarlet Crab was awarded the prize out of 300 other detective stories in New York this year. I can't help wondering what the others must have been like, for Mr. Knight's story is very unoriginal and depends for its solution on the suppression of evidence in the most hackneyed way. The setting, however, is pleasantly exotic, a rich man's yacht on a scientific expedition to the Galapagos Islands—but we never meet a giant tortoise!

Murder in Hospital also has the merit of atmosphere without originality of plot. Miss Bell knows her way about a London hospital and makes good use of her knowledge in providing the background for a series of murders, but I doubt if she would find any support in the medical text-books for her murder technique. Pseudo-science has never yet provided satisfactory solutions to detective stories, and never will.

Murder Most Artistic is spirited and amusing, and employs a very neat trick to side-track the reader's attention in the wrong direction. Recommended as light reading for people who enjoy a fanciful picture of the debauched life that goes on in the studios of Bloomsbury and Chelsea. *Bengal Fire* burns brightly in Calcutta, but the oriental setting and sentimental love-interest are of more importance than the thriller plot. This seems to be the bogus science season, as we meet a touch of it here, even in far-off Calcutta.

Cry Aloud for Murder starts well and finishes poorly. A small seaside community is thrown into great agitation by the strangling of a servant-maid. All the characters are suspicious and the atmosphere becomes tense. But Mr. McGuire cannot sustain his narrative at this desirable level. Once the explanation of the crime begins to transpire, the story peters out to a lame conclusion.

Ralph Partridge

ONE IRELAND

My Ireland. By Lord Dunsany. *Jarrolds.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Lord Dunsany, perhaps a little disorientated by the largeness of his publisher's invitation, halts and hovers rather over his opening chapters, then drops into his swing and writes an engaging book. High-handed, whimsical, bland, touchy, reactionary, and impossible to pin down to any point, here he has it all his own way—and what a way it is. *My Ireland* has, throughout, a sort of contrary soundness. It is written to please himself and, please God, infuriate others. The merit of the completely personal book is that it often captures, or rather blunders upon, that general quality that makes literature. This title (not his own choice) with its possessive smugness is certainly putting-off; one is led to expect some more of those whimsical retrospections to which the country have been too prone lately. "I shall never forget how the mountains looked as I hacked home, etc." But here the relation felt between the man and his land is profound, subtle and reticent. The retrospections are pungent, and are so defiantly mustered that they escape sentiment. Here is, for Ireland, more than sheltered affection: this goes back further than Eton, a turn for the twilight of history, or the Kildare Street Club. And here is, for this author, a refreshing absence of mystic experience. What dominates the book is satisfied love of a country, body and spirit—love which the too apt pen, by making articulate, has too often denatured or falsified: here it is not falsified.

In these pages, Lord Dunsany may be tendentious—in fact, he is clearly out to be tendentious, with his *Sackville* Street, his pouncing inverted commas, his little digs at the new Ireland that are about as playful as would be the nudges of a surviving bog moose—but he is not phony. His feelings are too furious to exploit. The finest part of his book, written in Ireland last winter, is more or less of a journal and is about shooting. Turgenev, Tolstoi, stake no claim on this as a subject; Lord Dunsany's experiences and reflections are his own. Art these days shows signs of decamping from enlightened Metroland, where it has lodged so uneasily; Horseback Hall is coming into its own again; we have had quite enough, for a bit, about the country from the kind hiker's angle; kindness to huntable animals is once more at a discount: art shows a re-mellowed attitude to sport. In fact, there is now in sight rather too much extraversion and blood. But at this still apposite moment comes Lord Dunsany, squelching about Irish midland bogs with his gun, full of bloodthirsty tenderness and of rude poetry either unselfconscious or raised to the

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CASSELL

hyper-consciousness of art. He is authentic, full of tips (care of shooting boots) and of plain facts :

> The outwitting of golden plover depends, in one of its branches, on going to the right spot in a hedge, while another man goes round to the far side of a field and drives them over. But I did not go to the right spot in the hedge, and only got one. Then I drew a small snipe-bog blank because it had been drained. But my gamekeeper pointed out that there was no harm in that, for it would be just the same again in two or three years. And this is undoubtedly true, for soil and air in Ireland seem to be at one in bringing back the bog to its own, wherever man has lifted the spade against it. The soil seems to work for the bog, while the damp air fights against man. And so the spade is laid by, and the bog steals softly back ; and in a few years there it is again, as though man had never troubled its ancient stillness . . . Memorials to this struggle may be found all over Ireland, and they mostly seem memorials to the victors, the wind and the weather.

All through : the romantic, endemic feeling for ruin :

> One does not fully understand Ireland if one overlooks the pace at which ruin floats on the gentle wind, and the grudge that the Irish soil seems to bear to civilisation. Earth seems to triumph in the end over civilisation everywhere, but a few decades in Ireland seem to have powers to bring down to oblivion, such as only comes with a thousand years to Egypt.

There is more, of course, to a book like this than shooting—there are personalities, hunts, legends, gossip, landscape and extinct cricket fields, now in pasture. Nostalgic and measured prose, that is at the same time vigorous, hangs over all this an iridescent veil. The book is not very happily illustrated by photographs of a Come-to-Ireland nature : these have little relation to Lord Dunsany's prose.

Lord Dunsany's turn of mind is his own, but his nature, his habit of living, are generic, inherited. The old regime throws out from time to time its artists, sports like this, minds that show degrees of creative, sometimes poetic, power—overbearing fantasists. Oddly enough—or is it odd?—lordly art has almost always a rude, sometimes not far from vulgar, and somehow saving quality : it may be orchidaceous, but it is rooted. Too cerebral bourgeois art, with its lack of attachments, is on the whole more often brittle, and so, ephemeral. There exists in one kind of art a touch of the peasant toughness that Proust saw in the Guermantes. For pages together in *My Ireland*, Lord Dunsany chooses to show himself as a quite impossible person—complacently dream-bound, overbearingly blind. Many might wish to displace him. But he has gone to the making of his Ireland, and his Ireland is valid—rich as peat with its memories, ignorant, but impossible to ignore. Elizabeth Bowen

WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

Greece's Anatolian Venture and After. By A. A. Pallis. *Methuen*. 10*s*. 6*d*.

This is not, as its title implies, a history of the Anatolian campaign. It is an attempt to apportion the responsibility for a catastrophe which brought the statesmen of Europe more dishonour, and the inhabitants of the Levant more misery, than any event of the war. It thus becomes a history of Allied dealings with Greece between 1914 and 1922, and as such—even allowing for its writer's bias as a Greek, which is very slight—makes singularly painful reading. And yet, in all this villainy there is no villain, unless everyone, except perhaps poor Constantine, is the villain in turn. That is what makes Mr. Pallis's task so difficult. The ancient Greeks, unlike modern film-producers, saw that the conflict between good and bad could not always by itself suffice to explain the miscarriage of human affairs ; they recognised the villainy of circumstances. And if ever the Fates justified their reputation, it was on that sunny day in May, 1919, when the modern Greeks landed at Smyrna under the dire conjunction of Messrs. Venizelos and Lloyd George, to reclaim Asia Minor for the Hellenes.

Mr. Pallis is not the Thucidydes of this episode, and he has not tried to be. What he has tried to do is to assist the Thucidydes of the future, whenever he shall arise, in telling the diplomatic half of the story. Here are the facts, the references and the actors, presented by one whose main preoccupation as regards his own country is that the quarrels of the past may be healed, not so much by oblivion as by recognising that both the Constantinists and the Venizelists had a sensible case and that both were patriots. Thus the obloquy which Greeks have hurled at one another for the last twenty years is here, and rightly, transferred to the Allies :

But if Venizelos can be criticised for having been unduly optimistic, and his successors for having been inconsistent and incompetent, the responsibility of the statesmen who directed the fortunes of the Entente throughout all this period is of a much graver order. They made use of Greece under Venizelos, they were prepared to do the same under Constantine. . . . There was no concerted action, no good will, no disposition to share in the burdens and sacrifices that were necessary if the peace settlement was to be enforced on Turkey. Greece might go to Smyrna as the mandatory of the Allied Powers, but that did not prevent one of the Allies—Italy— from giving direct help and encouragement to the Turkish Nationalists. Having sent Greece to Asia Minor, and thus compromised the whole of the Greek and Armenian population, those same powers then wanted, a year after, to turn her out again and patch up peace with the Turks, in the hope of thus being able to salvage their interests in Turkey, now threatened with destruction. . . . The Greece of Venizelos had been treated like a poor relation, whose importunities decency did not permit entirely to ignore. The Greece of Constantine was treated as an impostor who had penetrated, under false pretences, into the family circle. And yet the same 300,000 men, who had acted as Allied policemen in Turkey under Venizelos, continued under Constantine to mount their weary vigil on the edge of the Anatolian Marches.

And that is the truth. But when Mr. Pallis comes to analyse the events and motives which wrote such a miserable epilogue to the Allied victory, it is evident that good intentions were as much to blame as bad, and that such circumstances as the jealousy of the Tsar at one moment and the indifference of the Bolsheviks at another, the *sacro egoismo* of the Italians, the distrust of statesmen for soldiers in England and France, and the waning hold of Mr. Lloyd George on the affections of the English electorate, were the true causes of the disaster. What disgraced the Allies was their cowardice at the end, in making the disaster worse, by backing out when they saw it was inevitable and using the ignoble excuse of Constantine's restoration for their ignoble purpose. The only redeeming feature of their statesmanship in this last phase was Lord Curzon's insistence at Lausanne that the Greek Patriarch and population of Constantinople should remain there. Mr. Pallis might have mentioned this ; it is a mistake to paint us blacker than we were.

Yet the strange thing is that the story has a happy ending. The strength of a people in these days, and its freedom from international vexations, depend very largely on its assembly in a compact territorial state, where the whole race is brought under one rule and can devote its whole energy to the furtherance of one political interest. The expulsions that followed the Treaty of Lausanne may have been cruel, Asia Minor may have been ruined, and land occupied by the Greeks since the beginning of their history may have been lost to them for ever. But Greece herself, in assimilating with much pain the enormous body of 1,200,000 refugees, has benefited immeasurably in strength, enterprise and wealth, and at long last in friendship with Turkey, after an emnity which has lasted nearly 900 years. One of the most interesting parts of the book is that where Mr. Pallis describes the transformation in the nature of the Greek State accomplished by this process, and by the converse process of expelling the Moslems from Greece.

ROBERT BYRON

YACHTS AND CLIPPERS

Sailing and Cruising. By K. ADLARD COLES. *Batsford.* 7s. 6d.
The King's Britannia. By JOHN IRVING. *Seely Service.* 12s. 6d.
Clipper Ships of America and Great Britain. By HELEN and JACQUES LA GRANGE. *Putnam.* 25s.

Geologists tell us (or used to) that when the earth became too dangerous for our milder lizard forbears, they grew themselves wings and took to the air. In human history, as often as the land becomes too poor, or too crowded, or too bloody for its denizens, so often do men take to the sea in large numbers.

You can see it to-day. Our territorial playgrounds (as, one by one, they ripen for development) are taken from us ; and our fellow-countrymen are being driven in increasing numbers out to sea for their recreation. The increase, these last ten years, of the number of yachtsmen in the smallest and cheapest kind of yachts has been extraordinary. But it is not inexplicable, when you consider the condition of the countryside to-day.

A measure of this increase is the number of elementary text-books of sailing which are written for their guidance. For the old plan of getting some ancient fisherman to take you out in his boat, and teach you the ropes, has long gone by the board. There

"Those Foreigners"

The English people since Waterloo have had their own ideas on foreign affairs, often contrary to the official diplomacy of the Government. Opinion has veered from " splendid isolationism " to enthusiasm for co-operation between nations, from conceptions of balance of power to self-centred imperialism. In THOSE FOREIGNERS (10/6 net) Raymond Postgate and Aylmer Vallance chart the course of this opinion from 1815 to 1937, using copious extracts from the Press, ranging from Horatio Bottomley's *John Bull* to John Walter's *Times*.

Ambassadors who Intervened

Nineteenth-century British diplomats did not scruple to intervene in the domestic affairs of other nations. In ENVOYS EXTRAORDINARY (10/6 net) Edmund D'Auvergne describes a quintet of ambassadors " as remarkable as it was romantic " (*Observer*)—Stratford Canning, Henry Lytton Bulwer, James Harris, William Bentinck, and Hugh Elliot. Harold Nicolson, M.P., in *Daily Telegraph* refers to " the horrors of the former system " of diplomacy and says : " As we read this gay and witty narrative the blood runs cold."

Arabian Exploration

The history of travel and discovery in Arabia is told by R. H. Kiernan in THE UNVEILING OF ARABIA (12/6 net). Christopher Sykes in the *Spectator* says : " He has a great understanding of his task. . . . A half of this book is taken up with quotations, and so we not only have an extremely illuminating account of the long . . . process of the unveiling of Arabia, but a fascinating anthology of travel record."

Great Political Idealists

Professor F. J. C. Hearnshaw has selected nine chapters contributed by him to the series of books of King's College Lectures on social and political ideas published some years ago, and these are now published under the title GREAT POLITICAL IDEALISTS OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA (10/6 net). The subjects are St. Augustine (with new material), Wycliffe, Machiavelli, Grotius, Bolingbroke, Rousseau, Burke, Austin and Spencer.

HARRAP
182 High Holborn, London, W.C.1

are not enough ancient fishermen to go round, for one thing. And it takes so long: they are not quick instructors. How far better to buy a Little Book on it! This can be hidden in the office desk, and studied during the week. Then, when the week-end comes, all that you have to do is to spring lightly on board—and try to remember, in your Agony, all you have so carefully memorised at your ease.

These little books for sailors are countless now: and there is not much to choose between them, for they mostly give the same information in much the same form. *Sailing and Cruising* is a very fair example of these little books: better than some (since it has no very obvious faults): but not outstanding. It serves its purpose as a primer, but I doubt whether the student, once he has mastered what it has to teach, will feel any great temptation to re-read it. Frankly, if I were recommending a text-book to some beginner in sail, I think I should urge him to go the whole hog, and buy a *large* book; such as the excellent volume on Cruising in the Badminton Library. It will cost him more, in the beginning: but it will be many years before he can say, with his hand on his heart, that he has learnt all it has to teach, and exhausted all it has of interest. After that, I would advise him to buy Commander Irving's *Navigation for Small Yachts*—which *is* an outstanding book, though not new: the best on its subject that I have ever come across.

Indeed, Commander Irving is one of the best contemporary writers for yachtsmen. A profound experience of the sea, acting upon an intelligent and original mind, ensures that what he has to say is always of interest, and generally a personal contribution of his own. His modest use of decent English ensures that it will be a great deal easier to read than it has probably been to write. So it would be difficult to have found anyone better suited to his present task: to be biographer of the *Britannia*. For few nautical writers would have known so well how to balance technical knowledge and sentiment: not racing helter-skelter from extremes of the one to extremes of the other, from tables of facts and figures to pages of uncouth gush, but using both decently, suavely, and in moderation.

Britannia was launched on April 20th, 1893: on July 8th of last year she was buried at sea, off the Isle of Wight. During her more than forty years of life she was, without possible question, the most famous yacht afloat. Edward VII built her; George V loved her; Edward VIII gave her her funeral. Her record of wins in first-class racing will probably never be equalled. Again and again some new rating-rule drove her into retirement; again and again she re-emerged to win new victories, and put British yacht-racing (in the large class) on its feet again. Even in 1923, her performance-figure in the season's racing was higher than that of any of her new-launched competitors. She was a (very) wet-nurse both to Edward VIII and to George VI. It is small wonder that the public loved her as they have seldom loved any yacht: that she seemed to them immortal: that she became, in their eyes, the very flag-ship of British Sport.

It is not only the yachtsman, nor only the yachting fan, who will read this book with interest: it can be commended also to the social historian, who will find in it a very clear picture of a certain facet of Edwardian Society. For her sinking, last year, marked more than the end of a famous yacht. It marked the end, the final end of a period in which yachting was, more than any other, the aristocratic sport. The future of yachting lies not with Kings, but with the Little Man.

Clipper ships—the fastest sailing vessels the ocean has ever known—were not built for sport. They were fathered by the growing value of speed in trade: children of Time, of Chronos: and in the end devoured by their father. For the art of the sailing-ship, unlike most arts, never knew a decadence. It is an irony of history that the design of the sailing-ship was at its very height, at the moment when it was about to be driven by steam for ever from the sea.

(For ever, that is to say, unless Uffa Fox's 33-knot *Aurora* finds a builder.)

Most of the best books of nautical history, these last few years, have been American: the greatest clippers were American, too, which gives American historians a certain pre-emptive right to the subject. The right has been exercised by Helen and Jacques La Grange—he to draw and she to write. They have produced a large volume, a mine of information. But it has certain small drawbacks. The language used, for instance, is often (not always) florid and high-falutin', as if the author had neither the time nor the patience to put things simply and shortly: and that is inclined to make wearisome reading. Again, the colour-plates are not attractive. Wood-engraving seems to have an irresistible attraction for the uninteresting draughtsman—offering him a spurious appearance of sureness. But even among contemporary wood-engravings I cannot remember ever to have seen colour so depressingly ugly.

Richard Hughes

THE MARLAY LETTERS

The Marlay Letters. 1778–1820. By R. Warwick Bond. *Constable.* 21s.

A young, but already distinguished, Fellow of All Souls once remarked in my hearing, "But I like dull books." On reading the *Marlay Letters* I was reminded of that remark and felt that I could understand its force. To say that a book is eminently readable is not necessarily praise and certainly does not mean that it is worth reading. This book is dull and eminently unreadable, but it was probably never intended to be anything else. Of necessity it can only appeal to a limited circle of readers—to specialists interested in the early nineteenth century, and to those interested in Irish society. Family histories—if provided as this one is with a fairly workmanlike index—are useful contributions to our knowledge of the period.

Some years ago Professor Bond was made literary executor of the late Mr. Charles Brinsley Marlay. In this capacity he received a vast collection of letters and documents dealing principally with Lady Charleville, who was Mr. Marlay's grandmother. Lady Charleville married as her second husband the first Lord Charleville of the second creation. She was a brisk, versatile woman and corresponded with many famous literary and social celebrities of the day. Her son by her first marriage was a school friend of Shelley's, and some interesting letters between the two boys are printed here. Among Lady Charleville's literary friends—though they were not perhaps in the first flight of fame—were Lady Morgan, Miss Cornelia Knight and Maria Edgeworth. Lady Charleville lived to a great age (from 1762 to 1851) so that this is only a selection which may be followed by one or more volumes. Though it is rash to offer a suggestion without having seen all the material, it seems that the book would have profited in general interest if the author had distilled the essential matter about Lady Charleville into a single volume. The book as it stands is something of a jumble, and the seven family trees with which it closes, though satisfactory to the genealogist, are alarming to the general reader.

There are, however, some good things in the book and I particularly admired some of the drawings of Charleville Castle by one of the Ladies Bury done in the 1840's. The castle was rebuilt at the beginning of the nineteenth century and its completion was celebrated by a visit from the Viceroy in 1809. Lord Charleville wrote that his intention in rebuilding was "to exhibit specimens of Gothic architecture, as collected from Cathedrals and Chapel-tombs, and to show how they may be applied to Chimney Pieces, Ceilings, windows, balustrades, etc. The present prevalence of the taste for Gothic Architecture may at least sanction an attempt at exhibiting some specimens in their ancient purity." So far as we can judge, though the name of the architect is not revealed, the result was admirably successful.

The letters to and from James Tisdall—Lady Charleville's son by her first marriage—who was born in 1792, are some of the best in the book. He was at Eton and his fond mother was somewhat nervous at the boys having so much time to themselves which was chiefly spent in "rowing, jumping over Hedges with a Pole, eating geese and turkeys cooked in Tea-kettles." There is a good account of George III's Jubilee from one of Tisdall's friends and of the hearty manner in which Queen Charlotte ate the first slice of the roasted ox. A letter from a later correspondent gives an interesting sidelight on Queen Charlotte's daughter-in-law—George IV's wife—just before she set out for England in 1820. It is, too, pleasant to find additional evidence of George IV's taste for literature and to know that he was an admirer of Lady Morgan and described a savage review of Croker's on one of her books as "damned blackguard." Lady Charleville was a close friend of Grattan—some amusing letters from whom are published in the book—and was at his deathbed when Castlereagh came to offer his burial in the Abbey. She writes that "he waved his hand, and bowed his head but did not utter one syllable." A letter from Shelley to Tisdall in 1808 is revealing:

> There are thousands of wild Ducks and Geese in our River and Lake. I have shot at numbers but killed only one. But this is such

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shocking weather that to dissipate the stagnation of my spirits I like you am writing letters and, what you have given up, read Novels or Romances all day, till in the Evening I fancy myself a Character.

ROGER FULFORD

COMMON SENSE ABOUT SWIFT

Jonathan Swift. By BERTRAM NEWMAN. *Allen and Unwin.* 12s. 6d.

Yet another life of Swift! Five at least have been published in the course of five years, and the same period has witnessed the appearance of a full critical edition of the *Drapier's Letters* by Professor Nichol Smith and Mr. Herbert Davis and of M. Pons's elaborate philosophical exegesis, *La Jeunesse de Swift*. Meanwhile scholars like Mr. Harold Williams are at work to provide us with authentic texts of Swift's more important writings. In a modest apology for his addition to the list, Mr. Bertram Newman explains that his biography had been largely written, and his opinions on the chief aspects of Swift formed, before most of the other biographies had been published.

There will always be room for intelligent contributions to so fascinating a subject as Swift's life. Mr. Newman's book is an excellent one, distinguished by its precision and common sense, rather longer than most of the recent lives, and more objective than any. It approximates more closely to a standard biography than anything that has been published since 1894 when Sir Henry Craik's work appeared. Mr. Newman's judgments, shrewd and clear-cut, upon Swift, the man, will in the majority of cases meet, I think, with general acceptance in the future. But he recognises that in certain of the various problems raised by Swift's life, such as the possible marriage ceremony between Swift and Stella and the exact nature of Swift's relations with Vanessa, the evidence is too speculative to permit of the formation of confident opinions.

As Swift's first important writing was the satire on Christian dissensions, *A Tale of a Tub*, the first problem for his biographer is the character (if any) of his religion; we may agree that this work defends the Church of England against the Pope and against Calvin without being convinced that its author was a suitable candidate for Holy Orders in the English Church. From Queen Anne onwards it has seemed to many that the great Dean was merely a political Christian, at most technically orthodox. But, as Mr. Newman reminds us, even in Swift's early life indications of devotional habits peeped out; there are also the prayers for Stella and an observance of outward ordinances so regular as to preclude the idea that it rested on no basis of real conviction:

> For the Deism of his own day he had an unqualified contempt—were its exponents qualified, was anyone qualified, to define the undefinable, and to reduce the mystery of things within the bounds of his own feeble comprehension? It is not indeed probable that anyone endowed with Swift's vision of the world of men should have been destitute of, at any rate, one element in religion.

The object of Swift's worship was as remote as the God of the Deists but much more mysterious and awful; and thus we find in him traces of a creed whose votaries were in all ways hateful to his sight. "By conviction he was a churchman, by temperament something of a Calvinist." On the considerations which Mr. Newman himself brings forward I should be inclined to put it the other way round; however that may be, we are decisively shown in this book that personal religion played a great part in Swift's life.

On the related subject of Swift's misanthropy Mr. Newman is also good. Swift belonged to the race of Christian pessimists, and the reader's attention is drawn to a certain likeness between his tragic vision of mankind and that of Pascal. His "disgust-obsession" of which so much has been written, brings Flaubert to mind, as Mr. F. L. Lucas has noted; and what is modern realism but Christian philosophy with the "happy ending" left out? Mr. Newman quotes Flaubert: "*Et on l'évite en vivant dans l'art*," and adds, "a solution which was exactly the opposite of Swift's." Life for Swift may have been a bad business, but it was an interesting and an important one; and one of the merits of this biography is that we are shown Swift, escaped for long periods from his maladies of the spirit, enjoying himself eagerly and ambitiously in the world of politics, men and women. "There were elements," says Mr. Newman, "in Swift's character which might have been expected to paralyse his will, or drive him into a cloister. But they had just the opposite effect." Surely, however, Swift's character and philosophy sufficiently account for his aversion to marriage, and for his mysterious dealings with the two women who loved him; it is unnecessary to invest him, as Mr. Newman does, with an abnormal sexual pathology.

The treatment of Swift's Irish life carries conviction. We are reminded that the author of the *Drapier's Letters* was not merely the leader of a popular agitation—that owing to his fondness for moving about he knew agricultural Ireland very well; having "eyes that missed nothing, ears that heard everything," Swift might have been in our own age "another Horace Plunkett." It is shown that he was not interested in the idea of a separate Irish nationality; and Mr. Newman might have added that at the beginning of the eighteenth century such an idea had little conscious hold on any section of the people of Ireland. One of his hopes for the native Irish was that they should cease to be native. This is very shocking to the modern Nationalist mind; but it does not alter the fact that in Ireland Swift played the part of a patriot, as the term was understood in his times. This comparison of Swift's style as an Irish leader with Carson's is happy: the same "power to control as well as to excite," the same "hard core of business and practical considerations which underlay his appeal."

J. M. HONE

WOLFE TONE

The Autobiography of Theobald Wolfe Tone. Abridged and Edited by SEAN O'FAOLÁIN. *Nelson.* 5s.

When the original Constitution of the Irish Free State was drafted, after the Treaty of 1921, the main task was entrusted to an eminent Catholic professor and exponent of Sinn Fein. Several months passed, and, according to a humorous rumour at the time, the eminent professor had got no further than the Immaculate Conception. The practical work had to be transferred to a good Protestant, the brilliant but ill-fated Darrell Figgis. Mr. De Valera's new Constitution, according to the sententious Preamble, derives its democratic authority from the Most Holy Trinity, and in particular the Second Person. In this meticulous but bad theology may be traced the hands of the President's secret clerical advisers. This lip service may surprise readers unacquainted with the paradox of the Irish democratic spirit which still remains a mixture of French Revolutionary tenets and old fashioned English liberalism. Wolfe Tone was the chief figure among the United Irishmen who were inspired directly by the French Revolution. He is the father of Irish republicanism and the recognised apostle of physical force. During the last century and a half the Church has prospered and enriched its institutions in Ireland, but the saints and martyrs remain political ones. Despite the Preamble of the new Constitution, no man has died for the single or double procession of the Holy Ghost, but many men have given their lives for the idea of freedom. Irish political leaders, therefore, have to establish a delicate balance between the new ultramontanism and the democratic tradition. The latter has been paid for in blood, and, as many think, is too powerful an emotion to be destroyed. Ireland is conservative and, paradoxically enough, may preserve for itself that democratic spirit which other countries are trying to evade.

In this carefully abridged edition of Tone's lengthy diaries, Mr. O'Faoláin lays stress on the man rather than on the political and legendary figure. His introduction is excellently written, though it depends too much perhaps on Celtic charm. It is regrettable that he should have prefaced his remarks by quoting Wellington's patronising apology for his rebellious countryman. He should have remembered Tone's own words—"Success in the eyes of the vulgar fixes its merits," and in Ireland the successful Iron Duke is only a monument in a public park. Wolfe Tone has no monument but he remains the most impressive figure among Irish revolutionaries, because he was not a romantic dreamer, like Emmet or Fitzgerald, dedicating himself to a lost cause. At a particularly dangerous period, when the American colonies were lost, his daring plans of French aid might have succeeded. He instigated and took part, as a French officer, in the expeditions of Hoche and General Humbert. When he was captured by the British and sentenced to be hanged, he pleaded that he should be shot as a soldier. On the refusal of this last request he committed suicide in his cell.

Popular imagination demands its heroes and the genial human side of Tone, displayed so frankly in his private journal, has been curiously rejected. His political enemies made attempts to blacken his name and throw suspicion on his actions and motives. Mr. O'Faoláin wisely avoids these slanders and allows the reader to judge from the diaries themselves what manner of man Tone

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was. He has restored a few passages, omitted by Tone's son in the early American edition. The passages are discreetly veiled but they show that Tone, as most eighteenth century men of the world, did not find harm in gallantry.

> At the age of four and twenty, with a tolerable figure and address, in an idle and luxurious Capital, it will not be supposed I was without adventures with the fair sex. The Englishmen neglect their wives exceedingly in many essential circumstances. I was totally disengaged and did not fail to profit, as far as I could, by their neglect, and English women are not naturally cruel. I formed, in consequence, several delightful connections in London, and as I was extremely discreet, I have the satisfaction to think that not one of those to whom I had the good fortune to render myself agreeable ever suffered the slightest blemish in her reputation on my account.

The Diaries are particularly interesting for their first-hand and frequently malicious sketches of the Directory and the Paris scene, with its mixture of sentiment and bloodiness. There is an amusing picture of a performance of *Othello* with a happy ending. As Tone remarks ironically: "I admire a nation that will guillotine sixty people a day for months, men, women and children, and cannot bear the catastrophe of a dramatic exhibition!"

Austin Clarke

THE FAR EAST

The Far East in World Politics. By G. F. Hudson *Oxford University Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Struggle for the Pacific. By Gregory Bienstock. *Allen and Unwin.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

These two books cover much the same ground, but are poles apart in method and style. Mr. Hudson's is a model of conciseness, lucidity and masterly political analysis. It is short but every line of it is worth reading and the whole is obviously based on a careful research into original sources. Everything the author has studied has been reduced to its essentials before being presented to the reader, and every subject touched on, if only in a few sentences, shows careful study. Mr. Hudson stands above the battle and at no time expresses any judgment or condemnation, but neither does he ever attempt to represent British policy as anything but purely egotistical nor to palliate the ugly realities of the "opening up" of China. His book is a history of the policies of the principal powers in the Far East and of their relations with one another since the "opening of the gates" of China and Japan.

Mr. Bienstock attempts far more but achieves less. The canvas he covers is wider both in time and space, but he is too concerned to prove a "geo-political" thesis, and too inclined to trust to secondary sources of information, for his account of recent history to be either as accurate, as penetrating, as convincing or as readable as Mr. Hudson's. When, in the last section of his book, he deals with the relative strength of the combatants in a future Russo-Japanese or American-Japanese war, he shows an astonishing ignorance of Japanese national economy and in particular entirely ignores the food supply problem. He speaks of Japan as "having passed from a primitive agricultural economy" and is apparently unaware of her present-day semi-medieval agrarian economy and of her vital industrial weaknesses. He further speaks of Manchuria as a "fertile country" possession of which would give Japan an advantage over the U.S.S.R., whereas in fact Manchuria does not to-day feed herself much less Japan. Since Mr. Bienstock overestimates Japan's economic strength and underestimates her dependence on the markets of the U.S.A. and the British Empire, he can write of a war between Japan and the U.S.A. "lasting many years."

Wishing to relate the whole history of the action and reaction of Europe on Asia and of Asia on Europe, he has been unable to accomplish the vast task he sets himself and actually gives a far less complete account of how Far Eastern interests have affected European politics, and of how Asia has reacted to European aggression, than Mr. Hudson does. Carried away by his geo-political theories, Mr. Bienstock can make such statements as the following: "These two powerful continental States (the U.S.A. and Russia) in whose development and sociological structure may be found many common features."

Or again:

> The geo-political significance of the Borodin-Galen mission is not to be under-estimated. There is too great an inclination to lay stress on the social revolutionary class war feature of the alliance between the Russian and Chinese revolution. . . . What is of far greater importance is the fact that Moscow made an attempt on a large scale to bring the two empires into unison and so to unite Eurasia on a new basis. . . . If the attempt had succeeded . . . the continental steppe imperialism would have overcome oceanic imperialism in its two forms, the Anglo-Saxon and the Japanese.

He concludes that the main reason for the failure was that the technical and financial strength of the Soviet State was not adequate for the task. Contrast with the above Mr. Hudson's admirable account:

> Thus began the four-year partnership of the Kuomintang and the Communist International, a marriage of convenience in which each side hoped, first to make use of and then to cheat the other. The Kuomintang was primarily a party of the bourgeoisie; it was reformist and nationalist, but not Marxist. . . . The dictatorship of the proletariat was the last thing desired by the bankers, merchants and contractors who gave financial backing to the party. On the other hand . . . it was necessary to obtain the maximum of support from the masses by means of a demagogic propaganda . . . and a measure of assistance from abroad. . . . From the Communist point of view . . . the first task was to get rid of "feudalism" . . . and for this purpose the Chinese bourgeoisie needed an alliance with the peasantry and urban workers. The Communist idea was to arrange this alliance for the bourgeois leaders, hold to the coalition until the victory was won over the common enemy, and then at the critical moment "deepen the revolution," prevent the bourgeoisie from consolidating its new class ascendancy, and make the transition from Kerensky to Lenin. Further Chinese nationalism could be used as a weapon against the European capitalist powers, especially England. The power of finance-capital imperialism could be undermined by an anti-imperialist league of the Soviet Union and the exploited colonial and semi-colonial peoples.

He proceeds to show how Britain, "by a restraint which appeared to most British residents in China at the time as abject weakness and indecision," made possible an understanding with the Right Wing of the Kuomintang and so defeated the Communists and preserved her Chinese investments and the extra-territorial rights of all the Powers.

Mr. Bienstock envisages an understanding between the U.S.S.R. and Japan—since for him geo-political factors are all important. His view is entirely out of line with recent trends in the Far East. The U.S.S.R. is far more likely to reach an understanding with Nanking—witness the move of the Chinese Soviets for a "remarriage" with the Kuomintang, even at the cost of abandoning the agitation for the expropriation of the landowners—than to reach "the eventual Russo-Japanese compromise at the cost of China" which Mr. Bienstock thinks probable. The other alternative to-day is a compromise between Nanking and Japan, blessed by Britain, which will allow of the extensive exploitation of North China by Japan without any open political control by the latter.

The Struggle for the Pacific, however, contains valuable statistical and other information concerning railway and air developments in the Far East, and concerning the colonising of the Pacific Islands by the Chinese and Indians. It also gives an interesting account of the age of great oceanic expeditions to discover a sea route to East Asia. There is a section on Russia's early advance into Asia the details of which are not generally known. In the sixteenth century when the Portuguese first sailed into the Pacific the Russians crossed the Urals. Mr. Bienstock gives an extensive bibliography, whilst Mr. Hudson, unfortunately, gives none.

One of the most interesting chapters in *The Far East in World Politics* shows the consequences of Russia having been "put back into Europe" by her defeat in the Russo-Japanese war. In the previous period Austria and Germany had been only too glad to see Russia transfer her attentions away from the Balkans to China; France had only been able to retain her alliance with Russia and prevent her transferring her friendship to Germany by giving full rein to Russia's Eastern amibitions; and England had accordingly been unable to form an anti-Russian coalition in Europe. Being practically isolated England had allied herself to Japan. The Russian menace to British Imperial interests once eliminated by Japan, fear of Germany definitely replaced fear of Russia as the dominant motive in British foreign policy from 1905 onwards, whilst Russia, checked in the East, turned once more to the Balkans and so naturally allied herself with England against Germany and Austria. Germany instead of England became isolated and the Austro-Russian conflict broke out afresh and eventually precipitated the World War in 1914. "The Far Eastern situation imposed a regrouping of Powers which could never have been brought about if purely European issues had retained their primary importance for the relations of European States." British policy in relation to China is most clearly

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Mr. Hudson might be criticised for a certain exaggeration of Japan's power of retaliation to economic sanctions but he makes it clear that the reason Britain would not apply them in 1931–32 was the fear of seeing Japan broken and "communism triumphant" in the Far East.

FREDA UTLEY

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The Empire in the World. By SIR ARTHUR WILLERT, B. K. LONG, and H. V. HODSON. Edited by E. T. COOK. *Oxford University Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Ireland and the British Empire, 1937. By HENRY HARRISON. *Hale.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

That an Imperial Conference has been held this year gives the first two books an extra, topical value. Their end, though, is frankly didactic, and the contributors have had perhaps two main aims before them. The first of these is to bring to the notice of people in this country the obligations which they ought to fulfil by virtue of their being citizens of an imperial power; a burden which, as Mr. B. K. Long points out in *The Empire in the World*, "the people of the United Kingdom shoulder in a completely light-hearted spirit, even when they understand —which most of them do not—that it has to be borne. They live their self-absorbed lives sublimely unconscious of human destinies they control indirectly. If they happen to spare a thought for the Empire, it is with indifference or faint derision. Every now and then they find themselves listening, with hardly concealed resentment, to speeches about it; and when they refer to its peoples they mostly speak of them, with indulgent disdain, as 'niggers.'" The average voter is extraordinarily ignorant of even the most general facts about the contemporary structure of the Empire, the trends, the variety, the stresses and dangers to be found within its circumference. Mr. Gandhi as an exotic figure in a rather abbreviated night-shirt moves his amusement, but he has hardly the faintest conception of, say, the Indian agrarian problem in even its most obvious manifestations; and, to take other examples, he would be astounded to learn how high and how influential a percentage of Canadians are French, and would have little notion of the problems caused by that fact; if he has heard of the Statute of Westminster, it is extremely unlikely that he grasps even its most patent significance. Yet for all their ignorance and apathy, a pretty high proportion of the voters in this country feel strongly about the redistribution of the sources of raw material, and any hint that there should be lopped from the Empire a minor colony or a protectorate or two to satisfy the Have-nots is sure to meet with considerable opposition. Therefore the contributors to these volumes have had a second aim, expressed in the chapter on "The Colonial Question," in *The British Empire*—"if demands in the colonial sphere are made directly and openly upon the British Empire by the 'dissatisfied' Powers, the British Government will have to return a reasoned answer, and in so doing will need the support of an informed and consistent public opinion both at home and in the Dominions." Their aim has been to produce "an informed and consistent public opinion."

There was a danger that the two books might overlap; but their orientation is slightly different. *The British Empire* is the more detailed, the more academic of the two. It considers far more comprehensively the characteristics of the various constituent members of the Empire; it is more concerned with internal organisation, with the various administrative methods which have been adopted, and is rather more of a factual survey than a thesis propounding alterations and improvements; although in the third section, on Imperial problems, it does treat of generalisations and consider such questions as Defence and Economic Policy. It is a most useful source-book, an admirable prolegomenon to *The Empire in the World*, which as its sub-title, "A Study in Leadership and Reconstruction" suggests, is rather more militant in its proposals for reform and its criticisms of present tendencies. It pays more attention to the external relations of the Empire, and a section of "The World Around Us," by Sir Arthur Willert, considers the Empire from the point of view of its contacts with Europe, Japan and America. There is a salutary examination by B. K. Long of the way in which the Empire is run, which contains, in a chapter on "Empire Efficiency," a reasoned criticism of the Imperial Conference method, on the ground that it is cumbrous and that its corollary, the reference which has to be made by Downing Street to five other capitals to communicate its views on international situations which often require speedy action, involves too much waste of time. "Crises nowadays cannot be coped with in that leisurely fashion, persistently as Dominion susceptibilities require that they should."

Those dissatisfied with the rather sketchy treatment of the Irish Free State in *The Empire in the World*, and the fuller account in *The British Empire*, should read Mr. Harrison's book. This surveys the Anglo-Irish question with a wealth of detail and with that fervour of style which graced Mr. Pakenham's *Peace by Ordeal*. In Mr. Harrison's book the personalities involved in the dispute are not painted in so lively a fashion as they were by Mr. Pakenham, but Mr. Harrison is more concerned to build up his case against England by a review of the relevant documents and the recorded statements of politicians. It is his belief that "there is identity of essential interest for Ireland and Britain in any combination of circumstances pointing to the possibility of another Great War," and his book may be said to be written round that theme. He wants to show where either country is at fault so that after errors have been recognised there can be a reconciliation.

RONALD LEWIN

THE DAMES MUSCLE IN

Life is My Adventure. By BARBARA MULLEN. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Continuity Girl. By MARTHA ROBINSON. *Robert Hale.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

By now practically every man who has ever done anything unusual has presented the reading public with his memoirs. So, since every day women are becoming severer competitors of men in almost every sphere of activity, it is not surprising to find an influx of women autobiographers.

Miss Barbara Mullen's mother came from Connemara, her father from the Aran Islands. With Irish eloquence she tells the story of her life. Brought up in a Boston speak-easy, she early learnt the art of eluding the police and treating life as a cheerful, happy-go-lucky affair. Her mother and father were separated—an American criminologist recently computed that over 40 per cent. of juvenile delinquents came from "broken homes"—and Mrs. Mullen had forbidden Barbara to communicate with Pat Mullen, who had gone back to Aran. The lessons, however, on deceiving policemen had been so well assimilated that Miss Mullen found little difficulty in disobeying her mother, and the book ends with father and daughter meeting on Kibronan pier.

In between all sorts of things happen. We are introduced to Lady Biddy, whose cunning in hiding a pot of whisky beneath her voluminous skirts is described with tremendous gusto. We meet John Lally, a typical Irish playboy, Mike, Grahamy, and even Bart Jordan, a little rat of an informer. Miss Mullen can not only write and fool cops and mothers, she can also dance. At a very early age she won the New England Irish step-dancing championship, which resulted in her being taken up by the incredible Katherine Leary, the "World's Champion Accordion Player," who took her away on a ten months' tour. Fun and high spirits make this a most readable book.

Miss Robinson comes from this side of the Atlantic and is engaged in the British film industry. Like British films, her writing is painstaking, genteelly amusing, but oh so slow. The contrast between the Irish-American step-dancer and the English continuity girl is most instructive. Nevertheless, it would be unfair to describe Miss Robinson's book as dull. It takes one behind the scenes of the British film industry during its years of struggle after the Quota Act of 1927, and confirms all one's worst suspicions about the apparently senseless way in which film people set to work. Miss Robinson is at some pains to tell us that in the established film companies of to-day conditions are much better. One or two intimate portraits of the lesser notabilities of the cinematograph world are skilfully given and there are numerous excellent photographs, which form the most interesting part of the book.

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LAWRENCE AND WISHART

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

At the end of the eighteenth century an enterprising person, Mr. Barksdale, started a civet-cat farm in a house at Newington. Civet (which is secreted in two pouches and may be scraped from the pouches with a spoon) had been fetching £2 the ounce, but though no doubt the seventy cats made their presence known to all the noses in Newington, they may not have been profitable. At all events, Mr. Barksdale agreed to sell them for £852. The details of the sale are important, for they throw light on the character of the purchaser. Mr. F. was a general merchant, who had married money and had plunged heavily into a number of exceedingly speculative ventures. Mr. F. paid a deposit of £200 for the cat-farm, agreed to pay a further £300 within a month and to complete the purchase within six months. But one of Mr. F's creditors, hearing that he was in debt all round, seized possession of the cats, which were valued at £439 and offered for sale. They were not, of course, Mr. F's property, who had never paid even the second instalment. He had forfeited his £200 and Barksdale was already negotiating with another purchaser. Yet in spite of this, Mr. F. persuaded his own mother-in-law to put up the money to regain possession of the cats. It was simply throwing £439 after the £200. What was Mr. F.'s motive? For of course, after six months, the truth came out and cats and money were irretrievably lost, as well as £150 spent on cat's meat during the winter. Mr. F. does not seem a designing sharper, but simply a fool, an incorrigible optimist. He gained nothing by persuading his mother-in-law to throw away her money except that he concealed his own folly from her and his wife and for six months was able to maintain the fiction that they were all going to make their fortune out of civet. One would conclude that Mr. F. was a man to whom facts meant little and who lived in a world of sweet-scented dreams. But his dreams seemed so solid and looked as much a part of the real world as plain wheel-back chairs, freshly turned from a beech-wood in Buckinghamshire. For Mr. F. was Daniel Foe, Mr. *De* Foe, as he wrote himself, claiming descent from Norman de Beau-Foes, though his father was only a butcher.

* * *

There has never been a good biography or even a good appreciation of Defoe. The reason for this lack of intelligent appreciation is because biographers are commonly not artists but concerned with social ethics and history. Thus Defoe has been left to such champions as Wilson and Lee, who have made him a Nonconformist hero, waging a life-long battle for liberty of conscience. The latest biography, *Defoe* by James Sutherland (Methuen, 12*s.* 6*d.*) is in a different class. It is a very good book and the author tries to trace Defoe's career impartially and comes very near the truth. Mr. Sutherland sees the truth, but it is as though he could not keep it in his mind and so continually slips back into judging Defoe by ordinary standards. For example, he is continually worrying over the question of Defoe's sincerity, though the following summing up really disposes of the whole question.

> One of the most persistent pleasures in Defoe's life was make-believe, or more particularly, the impersonation of some other character. . . . In 1698 he had effectively impersonated a humble citizen in *The Poor Man's Plea*, and in 1702, he had reproduced with devastating success in his *Shortest Way* the voice of a high-flying divine. One is reminded of the small boy walking with exaggerated steps and gestures close behind some unsuspecting adult.

This is good; only the boy is out to make the lookers-on laugh. Defoe was acting in earnest. He only laughed to himself a long while later. Again Mr. Sutherland writes:

> This is not to suggest that in writing *The Family Instructor* Defoe had his tongue in his cheek. To make such a suggestion is to ignore his capacity for playing a part, for believing in the thing to which he had temporarily yielded himself. He was an artist, and he must at least be credited with an artist's sincerity when he wrote what he was willing to call his "religious play."

Mr. Sutherland sees the character so clearly and yet he follows Defoe's political changes step by step, justifying, or chiding him gently for betraying his principles and his fellow-Nonconformists. All of which, as he seems to realise at moments, is completely irrelevant. Defoe was a great natural actor, of enormous vitality, playing the parts which came his way with extraordinary gusto. First, as we have seen, he would be a man of business. His imagination was always fired by the idea of trade and of exorbitant profits rapidly mounting up at compound interest. In practice he found himself involved in a number of commercial lawsuits, for while eager to share in a profit he frequently contrived to leave his partner to bear the loss alone. While the fantasy of making a fortune out of civet still obsessed him, he went bankrupt for the first time to the tune of £17,000.

It is true that Defoe managed to compound with most of his creditors and by 1705 had reduced his debts to a mere £5,000.

* * *

Defoe, like Cobbett, had enormous energy, and in both energy seems the secret of their style. Since he could not speculate in the City, Defoe wrote *An Essay on Projects* and poured out pamphlets on maintaining a standing army, which were very useful to King William, and wrote *The True-Born Englishman*, which raised a laugh against those who were appealing to race-hatred against William's Dutch favourites. William rewarded him and found him useful, and the King's death was a disaster. Early in Anne's reign Defoe had to stand in the pillory and was sent to languish in Newgate for writing *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*. To the average man irony is as hateful as the piano is to the average dog; it is less remarkable that Defoe should have been punished than that Swift should have escaped after writing *A Modest Proposal*. Swift and Defoe were contemporaries who both served Harley; Swift, Mr. Sutherland suggests, being let in at the front door while Defoe was let out at the back. The fiery, passionate Churchman, and the smug Dissenter, aping the patriot or the grave citizen and rubbing his hands with a shopman's self-complacency—how different they must have appeared in life; and, *Gulliver* beside *Robinson Crusoe* on the shelf—how alike they are in death. Harley took Defoe out of Newgate to write the *Review*, which appeared three times a week, and a multitude of pamphlets and doggerel verses. But his most delightful job was that of Government spy.

> He was moving about from day to day among people who mistook him for someone else; he had a secret to keep, a little world of make-believe to wander in. But above all—and this was the very breath of life to Defoe—he had his finger in every man's pie.

Harley at first stood for toleration, but his party pushed him further to the right, until it looked as though Defoe, the Dissenter who had fought for Monmouth, would have to pave the way for bringing in the Pretender. Then Harley resigned and the Queen died and the Whigs came in with the Hanoverians. Defoe could not write directly for them, so he drew a Government salary to write in the high Tory papers and take the sting out of them. He wrote to Stanhope:

> By this management the *Weekly Journal* and *Dormer's Letter*, as also the *Mercurius Politicus* will be kept to pass as Tory papers, and yet be so disabled and enervated as to do no mischief. . . .

At the age of sixty Defoe had rather outlived his usefulness as a spy and a hack journalist. Something had to be done with the last ten years: so he wrote a host of novels, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moll Flanders*, etc. What shall we say? What can we say except to exclaim on the passionate love of life in so old a man. Perhaps his training in playing any part and taking any side was useful to him and his life had been a well spent apprenticeship. For what man of sense cares who Defoe betrayed? Spies and spied upon and the causes they served are dust. Man Friday and the dying goat in the cave and their author live for ever, immortals beyond praise or blame.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

King Wren : The Youth of Henri IV. By HEINRICH MANN. Translated by ERIC SUTTON. *Martin Secker and Warburg.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Alli's Son. By MAGNHILD HAALKE. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

A Modern Tom Brown's Schooldays. By MICHAEL SCOTT. *Harrap.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Is a Ship Burning ? By RICHARD SALE. *Cassell.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

King Wren is the best historical novel we are likely to see for a very long time. For holiday reading this is the perfect book of the season to take away : it is immensely long, yet its sustained excitement and quality make it easy to return to again and again. Historical fiction, not least when it deals with the dangerous pomps of the Renaissance, simply must be written by a first-class author. If it isn't, it becomes like the recent Coronation decorations. In the present instance, fortunately, we have the sixteenth century presented by one of the most accomplished living artists, and, among modern authors, he brings it to life in a manner which, since Lytton Strachey, has become unfamiliar.

Few things are so fascinating as to have the opportunity of peering deeply enough into a distant period to be able to grasp something of the psychological differences between persons then alive and ourselves. Regarded merely as facts, the ruthless behaviour in the Louvre under Catharine de' Medici, for example, is almost unbelievable. To-day, individual Europeans are happily incapable of behaving so : on the whole, nature no longer permits the thought of murder as a natural means of getting on. Yet, these murders were not perpetrated by human trash, gangsters or S.S. men, but by the very greatest. They were done, if one may say so, naturally. A comparison between the brutes of then and now is one which most readers will find themselves automatically making. Hitler might be called Catherine's counterpart in many things, and he has committed more crimes, with his press and radio, than ever she had the power to do. But had he been the contemporary of that pale, plump, sensible fiend, and had he made a bid for power, he wouldn't have lasted a day. On the other hand, of course, it was a period in which it is highly improbable that a person of his intellectual attainments would ever have been allowed to climb out of obscurity.

Herr Mann sees Catherine, the Valois, the Guises as fighting for the past, for violence, exploitation, intolerance : France, ravaged and disunited by religious wars, was their colony and Spain's. Henri's long, arduous journey to the throne is shown together with the cultural revolution that it symbolised, and his personal development towards freedom of conscience, humanism, is identified with the reintegration of France itself. His enchanting, complicated character—guile, goodness, simplicity and love of pleasure combining to produce a " champion of reason and joy "—is analysed with brilliant tenderness.

Among many masterly scenes there are several the variety, colour and force of which it would be hard to overpraise : Henri's tragi-comic bridal procession through the torchlit Louvre is one ; another is Henri III's Persian banquet to the younger court bachelors. I might end by saying that the massacre of St. Bartholomew alone is worth buying the book for : the translation by Eric Sutton is excellent.

A first novel, *Alli's Son*, comes with a recommendation from Sigrid Undset, and is plainly the work of a most unusual imagination. On one note, severely narrow in range, it offers a peculiar, sensitive portrait of Norwegian island childhood. By stealing and rhyming, Elling first sets his mother, and then the whole small community, by the ears. There are frequent passages of a small, sharp beauty, such as the incident when Elling builds a miniature house of stones in the garden for the silver coins he stole from his father. The writer's nervous tension and sincerity preclude whimsicality, and the boy's gathering madness is convincingly ominous. It is one of those crystalline, northern stories in which, especially during seashore moments, one seems to be looking through a magnifying glass.

Mr. Scott's volume, bound in the old school colours, with a recommendation by the Bishop of Liverpool on the back, and hopefully christened " a novel of Rugby School life," is a very rare find indeed. (The Bishop says " The shadier side is not ignored but given its right proportion." I disagree, regretfully.) Here, we are concerned with the unique case of an author who is so matchlessly, so impossibly, the product of his subject, that the subject itself wields the pen. This has resulted in shades and gradations of unconscious folly so exquisitely subtle, and yet so overwhelming, that one feels they may never be captured again. The " novel " is an unfaltering, full-throated paean to public-schoolism in general, and to a wholly incredible Rugby in particular. (A few fumigated characters are introduced from Hughes' book.) One is given the whole works—the hero's dear old titled parents in Somerset ; the golden curls ; the adoring dog ; the winning but beastly smile from godlike Flashman of the cricket eleven :

> " I shouldn't encourage him too much if I were you, Tom. Flashman isn't the sort of chap that does any good to new boys."
>
> Tom's thoughts went black. Then he spoke, quietly.
>
> " Thanks, Tadpole."

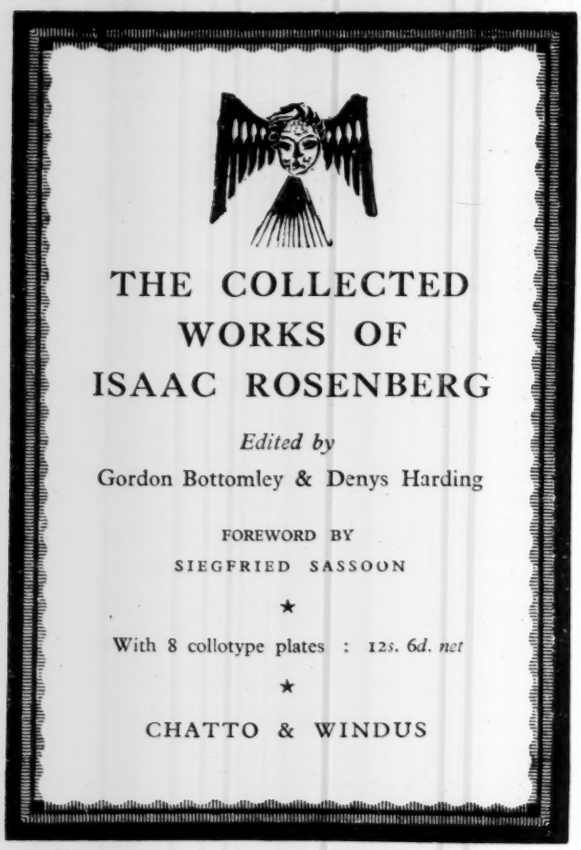
The Church, the Empire, games—there's everything one could wish—even the Welsh miners, though they, of course, " had the reputation for doing something unruly, like striking, or singing, instead of mining." Sex alone is cold-shouldered, though with a desperate, backward look. At its approach, one can positively see the author's craft ebbing. Tom gets no further than this :

> Tom opened his eyes to blue plush curtains. He turned his head, and saw Tadpole buried deep in his bed. " How nice," thought Tom, " to lie in bed, comfortably, and watch your friend sleeping ! How *very* much nicer to be able to turn over and watch your girl asleep, and put your arm, gently, protectively, across her shoulders ! There is something enervating in the thought of your girl—a mature feeling, a knowledge of responsibility and of biological achievement."

Well, all I can tell you, Mr. Scott, is that Tom had better get rid of that feeling of enervation before he starts in on any biological achievements, or he'll have her calling him a sissy faster than he can say Flashman.

Is a Ship Burning ? lies in that region between the thriller and something better. A competent, American-tempo story in which a Caribbean pleasure-cruise love-affair is interrupted by the burning of the ship ; it is an ideal book to buy for a short journey. The very quality of being over-written in the particular way that it is, lends it a brisk, awkward charm.

> " The hell with Nietzsche," I said listlessly. " I came down here to kill some time and you wrap me up in a lot of fol-de-rol. As a matter of fact, I don't give a damn who Mrs. B. sleeps with. When it happens to be Frank Crawford, it's decay to me."



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The wireless operator sits " bathed in the xanthic glow of the bulbs, singing 'Home, Sweet Home' above the burping voice of the contacts," and it is all very enlivening indeed. Mr. Sale knows about ships, and had the sense to make both his heroine and hero thoroughly attractive. The closing scene, in which a fat, impertinent old capitalist rolls off, and a gangster is pushed off, the raft into a crowd of patiently jostling sharks is perfectly splendid.

BRIAN HOWARD

SONG OF DEEDS

In Parenthesis. By DAVID JONES. *Faber and Faber.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The winter of 1915–1916 in Flanders was cold, dour, ominous. The autumn bolt had been shot at the Loos slag-heaps, and failed. In sleet and the half-frozen mud death kept his hand in, practising new devices whilst new armies were got ready, with nibbling raids and small advances and withdrawals that left things always as they were. Trench-feet and P.U.O. cluttered up the casualty-clearing-stations. Far off, to the south-east, Falkenhayn began and accentuated his pressure on Verdun, week by week more terrible. Dimly but unmistakably men could feel that a new stage was opening, that the worst was yet to come. As it was. For all this was the prelude to the great turning-point which came, in due time, with midsummer and the inconceivable drum-fire of the Somme.

Those months have engendered, after twenty years and more, the long and extraordinary " writing " (as he calls it himself) which Mr. David Jones now publishes as *In Parenthesis*. It may be said at once that to style this a " war book " would be misleading. Certainly, it is about the war, drenched in the war; but that label suggests a form of descriptive chronicling with which he has not been directly concerned. His " writing " has in it no verse (except for allusive echoes of other men's), but in essence throughout it is a poem. It distils a personal and a communal experience of the most intense kind, at once physical and spiritual, merging the near present and the far past into a locking unity and creating, for all the tightly packed detail of sights and sounds and speech belonging to certain men in certain years, a kind of timelessness. He writes his book about

> the rifle strength
> the essential foot-mob, the platoon wallahs, the small
> men who permanently are with their sections, who have
> no qualifications, who look surprisingly from a confusion
> of gear, who endure all things. . . .

—about a battalion of mixed Welshmen and Cockneys, with a Private John Ball cropping up here and there as a focusing-point. But somehow, by the instinctive apprehension of these particular men's bodily and inner being, he gives them a measure of universality that is amplified by the threads of legendary and literary allusion, often highly personal but seldom really obscure, with which he joins them to the structure of his *chanson de geste*.

He writes with enviable clarity of line, although he does not boggle at using words which are uncouth, but yet are accurate and apt; and the writing throughout has a strongly visual quality which admirably suits its subject—not unexpected from a painter and draughtsman of Mr. Jones's gifts. The ultimate effect of the " poem's " seven parts is gradual and cumulative, and quotation from a texture so closely worked and composed can never be quite satisfying. But to convey anything as a foretaste of the book, some quotation is necessary. Here is one fragment, from the opening part where the battalion is leaving its camp in England for the port of embarkation, with its N.C.O.s working hard to make a good departure :

> Keep those slopes.
> Keep those sections of four.
> Pick those knees up.
> Throw those chests out.
> Hold those heads up.
> Stop that talking.
> Keep those chins in.
> Left left lef'—lef' righ' lef'—you Private Ball it's you I'v got me glad-eye on.

So they came outside the camp. The liturgy of a regiment departing has been sung. Empty wet parade ground. A camp-warden, some unfit men and other details loiter, dribble away, shuffle off like men whose ship has sailed.

The long hutment lines stand. Not a soul. It rains harder: torn felt lifts to the wind above Hut No. 10, Headquarter Company; urinal concrete echoes for a solitary whistler. Corrugated iron empty—no one. Chill gust slams the vacant canteen door.

And later, after hours of numbed waiting in the maze of docks and warehouses mysterious in the night :

. . . Sometime between midnight and 2 a.m. they were paraded. Slowly, and with every sort of hitch, platoon upon platoon formed single file and moved toward an invisible gangway. Each separate man found his own feet stepping in the darkness on an inclined plane, the smell and taste of salt and machinery, the texture of rope, and the glimmer of shielded light about him.

So without sound of farewell or acclamation, shrouded in a dense windy darkness, they set toward France. They stood close on deck and beneath deck, each man upholstered in his life-belt. From time to time a seaman would push between them about some duty belonging to his trade.

And so we follow them, drawn into their uneasy, inexplicable pilgrimage. The exactitude of bare description is often quite extraordinary, as, for instance, in the whole page at the close of Part II which records with such strange precision the coming and falling of the first, unexpected shell, attacking all the senses with the cruelty of a rape; or the halting progress of the battalion moving up the line in darkness, guided by uncertain messages passed down from mouth to mouth; or the " Lazarus figures " seen by light of star-shells ladling out a flooded trench and lifting lost corpses from the slime; or where

> you can hear the rat of no-man's land
> rut out intricacies,
> weasel-out his patient workings,
> scrut, scrut, scrut,
> harrow out-earthly, trowel his cunning paw;
> redeem the time of our uncharity, to sap his
> own amphibious paradise.

All kinds of fragments, all kinds of swift portraits of obscure men, are tightly packed into the intricate pattern. It urges no case, for war or against war: the man who is outraged by the assault of steel and chemicals on harmless men can also see (Part VII) the bitter beauty of the rifle which is the infantryman's first and last companion. It has, in fine, a dignity which has seldom been attained, and never so consistently held, by a writer whose impulsion has come from the stress of modern war.

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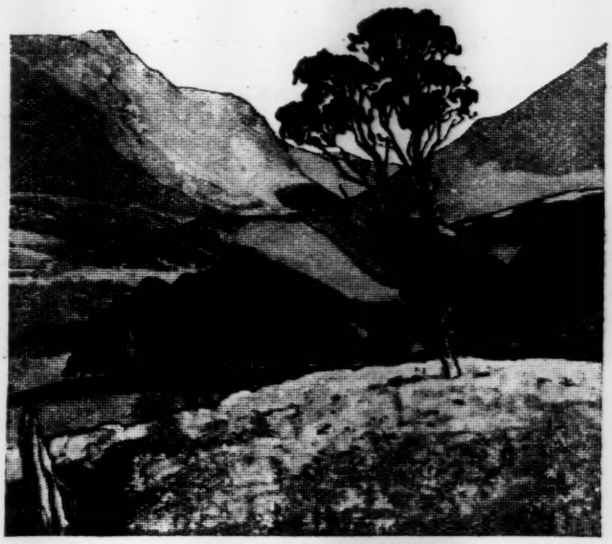

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GOING TO THE DOGS?

The Condition of Britain. By G. D. H. and M. I. COLE. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

Nearly a century ago an industrious collector of statistics dedicated the published fruits of his labours to the Right Honourable the Members of His Majesty's Cabinet. "The difficulty of governing a people," he explained, "is greatly enhanced by their ignorance of facts which apply to their condition, a correct knowledge of which would go far to remove much of their discontent, and enable them to appreciate justly the value of the laws and institutions under which we have the happiness to live." Quite opposite is the standpoint from which Mr. and Mrs. Cole have made this valuable survey of *The Condition of Britain*. Their predecessor was confident that correct statistical knowledge would suffice "to counteract the pernicious influence of bad and designing men" and "to generate a well-founded hope that the resources of this great country are not only unimpaired but inexhaustible." Not so Mr. and Mrs. Cole. Their book, they point out, is mainly descriptive and its description is as objective as they can make it. But they make no concealment of its ultimate intention. "We want the truth to be known," they write, "because we believe that the knowledge of it can serve as a stimulus to action." If an earlier generation could be confident that the only barrier to economic bliss was a little working-class ignorance, to-day the roseate hues of the early dawn of industrialism have faded. Early-Victorian optimism has given place to post-Edwardian doubt. In that younger age it was possible to combine the deepest Malthusian gloom with a positively heroic complacency. Things could be left alone, provided only that bad and designing men were kept at arm's length. Now we know that earthly paradises have to be built—they do not just grow of themselves even in the gardens of capitalism. In these our harder times we have substituted scepticisms for complacency and boxed the Malthusian compass. Only Colonel Blimp, pushing his empty pram past the serried ranks of our athletic Amazons, still has faith in his dead England's expectations. The rest of us know not that Britain, as always, is going to the dogs, but that she has a queasy stomach and needs some sort of aperient. Mr. and Mrs. Cole have examined the symptoms with scrupulous care. They do not claim that they are making discoveries of new facts or that they have written without feeling. They have tried to present "a true picture of the present position of the British people, the good side equally with the bad, the factors making for progress equally with those wherein lies the danger of slipping back." The word "progress" may tempt the cynic to point his finger of scorn, but the reply is that this is a work of synthesis as well as interpretation. It is inspired by a sense of direction and purpose. It issues from a double line of ancestry. On the one side it springs from the official intelligence system by which the processes of government and administration live and move and have their being; on the other, it belongs to the long line of exposures of the order and disorders of capitalist industrialism. Early statistical abstracts included little more than import and export figures, public finance, population and poor law data. There has been a progessive expansion in the range and quality of our official statistics, and an immense accretion of valuable commentary has grown up alongside. It would be possible, perhaps, to discipline all this material quite neutrally, but it is unlikely that anyone would want to make the attempt. It is, in fact, their Socialism that has led Mr. and Mrs. Cole to give their book its shape and outlook. *The Condition of Britain* is thus both a storehouse of sifted fact and a cogent critique of our civilisation in its social and economic aspects. If it contains nothing of the waning of old religious observances and beliefs and the waxing of Buchmanism, nothing of the changing patterns of entertainment or public enjoyment or personal adornment, nothing of the growth of bureaucracy or the addiction of civil servants to cross-word puzzles or the bourgeoisie to crime-stories or the thousand-and-one other cultural peculiarities of contemporary Britain, it is on that account likely to be more rather than less useful. There is no other compendium comparable with it where are set out so clearly the basic facts about our population, their numbers and occupations, their command of food, shelter and clothing, their health and their wealth, their educational opportunities and political and industrial associations.

There will be critics of the detail of this book. Some will say that greater caution should have been exercised in the adoption of the conclusions of, say, M'Gonigle on *Poverty and Public Health* and, in the absence of an agreed standard of nutrition or malnutrition, of Sir John Orr. The critics of the Left will complain that there ought to be less caution in the chapter on our wealth-distribution, a readier recognition of the increasing poverty of the poor. Such criticisms cancel out. Others will complain of omissions, and it would not be difficult to compile a list, though not a very long one, of topics which might have been included or given fuller treatment in a non-specialist book. It will be a fairer assessment of this valuable work, however, to point out the freshness of some chapters while stressing the usefulness of all. Particularly admirable are the exposure of the deficiencies of our educational system, especially its insistence upon the effects of its class-ridden character, and the analysis of the productive system, with its careful examination of technical and social potentialities. There is material for every Socialist platform in the country in these chapters, and it is material which has been too much neglected in recent years. Another chapter which should be pondered over deals with the working-class movement. Relating Trade Unionism to the trends of change in industry, it makes far from cheerful but very necessary reading. It explains much that is happening in politics to-day—but the whole book does that, and therein lies its very considerable value. H. L. BEALES

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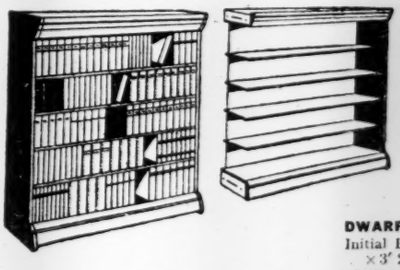

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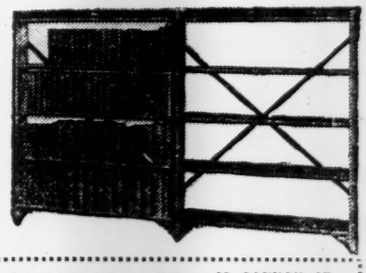

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He is wholly on the side of the co-operator. In describing the Movement, its successes and its charms, he is on common ground with all its admirers. He sees it as an alternative to the capitalist system, organising industry for use through the democracy of consumers. Here he differs from many previous writers only in the genuine fervour of his enthusiasm. His real contribution consists in the way in which he relates the functions and achievements of the Movement to certain tendencies which have appeared in modern capitalist industry. He argues that the growth of trusts and monopolies, protection, quotas, marketing boards, subsidies, is part of a desperate attempt to avoid the breakdown of the capitalist system of industry. The capitalist, in political control, calls in to his aid the law and the state. The economic system, based upon competition, for purposes of profit making, necessarily begins to cut its own throat and swallow its own tail. The profit makers feel the process beginning in the evaporation of profits. They turn to the state for help and capitalism goes on the dole. The capitalist's dole is given without a means test in the shape of tariffs, quotas, subsidies, monopolies, and price-fixing agreements protected and enforced by the law courts. The dole is paid by or combed off the consumer. The most valuable part of Mr. Elliott's book is that in which he shows in detail the extent to which this process has gone in Britain and the methods by which the object of the indigent capitalist and financier is attained. His evidence is unimpeachable, for he wisely draws it almost entirely from Government commissions and inquiries. Many people, unfamiliar with Mr. Elliott's authorities, will be surprised to learn something about the various ways in which the dole is being raked off himself and other consumers. And many of them will, perhaps, be even more surprised by the evidence which Mr. Elliott has accumulated for what is in effect the main thesis of his book, namely that "the only guardian of the consumer against the dangers here revealed is the Co-operative Movement."

It is to be hoped that many members of the Labour movement, trade unionists and Marxian socialists as well as co-operators, will study Mr. Elliott's facts and learn their lessons. The chief lesson for the Socialist or for anyone who is concerned by the effects upon society of competitive profit-making is the immense potentialities of consumers' co-operation as an alternative to the existing system. But that brings us to the faults in Mr. Elliott's book. Its chief fault is unhealthy optimism. I find little to disagree with in what he says about consumers' co-operation as a system, but his picture of the Co-operative Movement in working is altogether too rosy. It is not that his statements and facts are inaccurate, but a false effect is given by the absence of all criticism. For instance, to take a crucial case, the potentialities of the Movement as a guardian of the consumer and still more as an alternative to the present system depend upon its powers of expanding co-operative trade. Those powers depend in turn upon the efficiency of the existing Movement as an expanding economic organism. The most sincere admirer of the Movement who has any knowledge of its working is aware that it is lamentably deficient in organisation from this point of view. Even the statistics and information from which alone it would be possible for the Movement to learn to what extent co-operators are acquiring or have acquired a potential market or to plan an extension of co-operative trade are not available, partly because of the individualism of the retail societies and partly because hardly any society has begun to think of such planned expansion.

This is only one example of the kind of criticism which is entirely omitted from Mr. Elliott's book. There are dozens of other cases in which similar difficulties or deficiencies are ignored. It is a great pity, for the book would have gained enormously in value if Mr. Elliott had maintained a more critical attitude towards the Movement as it is and if he had added a chapter dealing specifically with the defects of its organisation and the problem of its development and expansion. LEONARD WOOLF

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Those who know *A Garden in Wales* (Arnold), or who read Mr. Johnson's weekly articles, will need little urging to get *A Woodland Garden*, which might be described as a memoir of the labours, victories, and—rare—defeats during the ten years since his earlier book. Although he deals with a wide range of plants, shrubs, and trees, his book is very readable, and contains good talk as well as first-hand knowledge. Most gardeners, if honest, will admit some envy in reading of all the fine things Mr. Johnson succeeds in growing. Envy and admiration, for one learns from Lord Aberconway's preface that the garden is not one of those where plants seem to grow of themselves; neither soil nor climate is particularly favourable. Mr. Johnson's method is to try for himself what will succeed and what will not. Speaking of shrubs, he says:

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reproductions primarily by their subject matter, which seems a less satisfactory method than the chronological method as used by Venturi in his *Cézanne*. But this is a minor criticism; by its completeness as well as by its cheapness this supersedes any other book on Rembrandt's painting. 500 *Self Portraits* contains the following quotations which seem to sum up the situation: "The mirror above all, the mirror is our teacher" (Leonardo da Vinci). "Narcissus, who saw his reflection in the water and trembled at his own beauty, was the real inventor of painting" (Alberti). It is difficult to imagine old Rembrandt trembling so, or Cézanne, and no doubt what quiver Renoir felt was mostly due to rheumatism; but it remains apparent that the portrait of himself is the most exciting subject an artist can undertake. It is an excitement that has good results, for dull painters have often produced interesting self portraits. In their selection of the works to appear in this book the editors have banked perhaps too much on this stimulant. The self portraits by modern German artists such as Corinth, Beckman, and so on, lead one to suppose that dullness can be proof even against self love. The earliest portrait in the book is Egyptian, the latest by Giorgio Chirico. The introduction refers to each illustration and is erudite in brief. *Titian, Paintings and Drawings* makes no claim to be complete. It is supplementary to Dr. Hans Tietz's two-volume work on Titian. The 350 illustrations show how, in the course of a long life, Titian grew away from his master Giorgione and towards his successor Tintoretto. In addition to a short introduction there are historical notes on individual pictures and an admirable index. *The Art of Ancient Egypt* is a less important work. The illustrations (340, of which eight are in colour) are not exactly hackneyed, but a great deal of the ground has been covered before. There is an unusually large selection of the masks from Thutmosis' studio, but this good point is a little nullified by the uninspired introduction which suggests that the Thutmosis-Ikhnaton phase was mere eccentricity and is quite glad to return to the painful art of King Tut. The *Van Gogh* is perhaps the least important from the student's point of view, but it must certainly have the greatest popular success. It is the inevitable complement of every *piper druck* that enlivens a breakfast—drawing or school—room throughout the country. Dr. William Uhde's introduction is short, interesting and to the point. The fifteen colour plates are of the kind that normally sell for half-a-crown each, while the 104 monochrome illustrations are very large and unusually well done.

M. Rocheblave's *French Nineteenth Century Painting* is in a more ponderous and pretentious class. This is a fine "presentation" volume with 94 illustrations, suitable for prize days. M. Rocheblave, who is an honorary professor of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, has studiously avoided favouritism. Ingres and Delacroix are equally represented. Bouguereau is somewhat unaccountably left out. Messonier gets in, while such obscure artists as Hebert (Antoine-August-Ernest) and the Pompeianising Gerome are represented by works for which oblivion is the only hope. M. Rocheblave admits Seurat and Cézanne a little grudgingly. There is a short biography of each painter whose work is included and an introductory essay, which, if it does not add much to the body of critical opinion, has at least added a remarkable fact to history in its suggestion that Manet's work was turned down by the Salon des Refusés in 1863.

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SHORTER NOTICES

Florence Nightingale: The Woman and the Legend. By MARGARET GOLDSMITH. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 15s.

The chief object of this book, it seems, is to destroy the sentimental legend of "the Lady with the Lamp." But is not this flogging a dead horse? Does any educated person believe in that legend? It was effectively destroyed 24 years ago by Sir Edward Cook's excellent *Life* of Florence Nightingale; Lytton Strachey's in *Eminent Victorians*—a portrait which is a consummate work of art—spread the truth among a very wide public; and Miss O'Malley's admirable *Florence Nightingale* contributed still further to our knowledge of the facts. Finally there is a good short biography by Miss Irene Cooper-Willis. This new book contains little or nothing new, except a number of small inaccuracies, and a number of ingenuous comments. Miss Goldsmith is continually being astonished that Florence Nightingale was not a feminist, was not a pacifist, was not a Socialist, was not, in fact, a person sharing all Miss Goldsmith's opinions. She is even astonished that Florence Nightingale was profoundly impressed by the Sistine Madonna in spite of having seen "real works of art" in Greece. Why an acquaintance with Greek art should diminish any sensible person's admiration for the genius of Raphael passes our understanding. Miss Goldsmith in her account of the quarrel with Mary Stanley is incomprehensibly unfair to the heroine of her book. On the mysterious cause, almost certainly psychological, of the ill-health which made her a self-constituted prisoner the book sheds no light. Altogether it is most regrettable that Miss Goldsmith should have wasted her energy and talents upon a book which has no conceivable *raison d'être*—unless it be that there are foolish persons who would rather read a bad book written in 1937 than a good one written in 1913 or 1932. This is a type of book which deserves to be discouraged.

The Pope in Politics: The Life and Work of Pius XI. By WILLIAM TEELING. *Lovat Dickson.* 7s. 6d.

This book is important because it expresses the opinions of a great many English Catholics whose outlook is very rarely represented in the ordinary Catholic press. The papacy has often in the past been regrettably and unwillingly dependent upon some great European Power, but its independence has never been so gravely in danger as it is to-day. At this moment, when Italy is for the first time in history a great and aggressive Power, the Pope happens to be a passionately patriotic Italian; though his independence requires more careful preservation than ever before, he has made peace with Quirinal, and his politics now seem identical with Mussolini's. English Catholics, therefore, are for the first time for centuries finding themselves divided in their loyalties. Their press is enthusiastically pro-Italian, but many of them regard with consternation the Vatican's support of Fascism. His Holiness, it is true, has fulminated against Nazi ideology, but Mussolini's definitely anti-Christian exaltation of war, and of the state over the individual now passes uncondemned. Meanwhile, in the United States the most powerful Catholic community in the world is becoming increasingly critical of the Vatican's Italianism. Mr. Teeling gives an excellent account of Ambrose Ratti's life from his birth in modest circumstances to the recent encyclicals of Pius XI. He also summarises the present situation of the Catholic Church in the most important countries of the world. (His account of Belgium seems to have been written before the recent striking victory of the Church over Rexism.) He is politely candid in his criticism of the policy of Pius XI, and it is impossible, we think, to read his book without an increased admiration for the wisdom of Benedict XV and an increased perception of the risks of the present policy. Perhaps the clerical opposition to the Risorgimento was wiser than anyone knew. The Italy which has resulted is no home for the Head of an essentially international institution. Mr. Teeling, who is a devout Catholic, is to be congratulated upon his courage, moderation and good sense.

The First Queen Elizabeth. By KATHARINE DAVIES. *Lovat Dickson.* 10s. 6d.

Not enough is known about Elizabeth Woodville, the wife of Edward IV, to make any lengthy study of her life an altogether satisfactory undertaking. The widow of a Lancastrian noble killed at Towton, she had sufficient personal charm and business acumen to persuade the young King not only to restore the confiscated property of her family, but, in the face of powerful opposition, got him to marry her as well. In the fifteenth century, and in the middle of the Wars of the Roses at that, when the King's position so largely depended upon an influential marriage, this was no mean achievement. As a result, Elizabeth Woodville has been written off by the average historian as a barefaced gold-digger. "It would be idle to deny," admits Miss Davies, "that once she found herself Queen of England she did all in her power to advance her family, and that the consequent jealousy of the rival party at Court caused the disasters which finally overwhelmed her. . . . But it is difficult to see what other faults can be laid to her charge." It is equally difficult to find much to her credit either, for Elizabeth herself hardly emerges from this record of intrigue, murder and war in which

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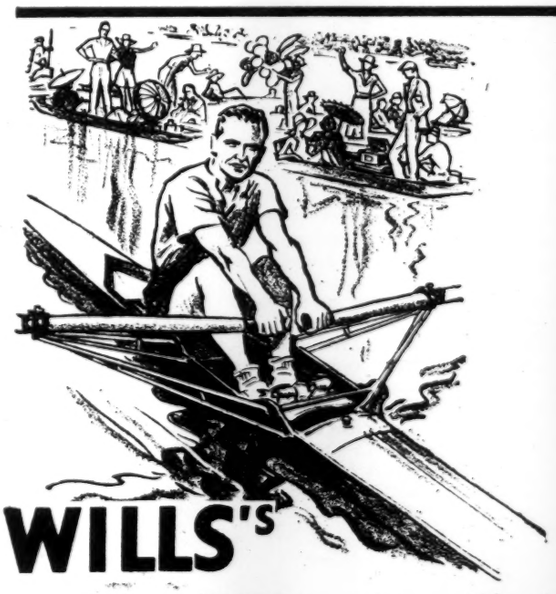

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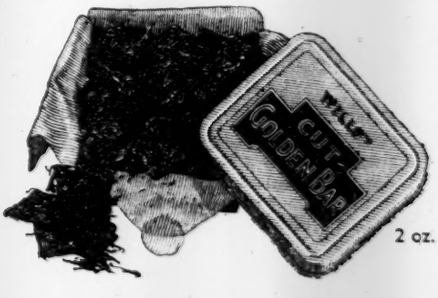

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the peculiarly shabby aristocracy of the fifteenth century spent their lives. Nor does she appear to any better advantage in either *Henry VI*, Part 3, or *Richard III* (scenes from which are given in an appendix), where she is never much more than a lay figure. Much clearer, however, are the more dynamic characters of the lascivious Edward and his scoundrelly brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Miss Davies has made the most of a subject that offers little opportunity to the biographer. With the help of large print, wide margins and blank pages between the chapters, the publishers have managed to bulk the book out into the semblance of a full-length biography—though while they were about it they might have spared a little more space and given us an index.

* * *

We regret that in our review last week of *Tyrant of the Andes* by Thomas Rourke (Michael Joseph), the price was given as 15*s*. It should have been 12*s*. 6*d*.

Week-end Competitions

No. 380

Set by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for an extract of not more than 300 words from a letter home, containing the most completely uninteresting description of *either* (*a*) a visit to Chartres, *or* (*b*) an interview with Herr Hitler, *or* (*c*) an ascent of the Matterhorn, *or* (*d*) a gala performance at La Scala, Milan. Flatness rather than dryness should be aimed at.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, July 2nd.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of the last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 378

Set by Roger Marvell

People often express the regret that they were not born in some other age. You are invited to describe the period of which you dream, making clear your reasons for preferring it. The usual prizes are offered for the best entries, which must not exceed 20 lines of verse or 300 words of prose.

Report by Roger Marvell

The gloom reflected in the entries for this competition is appalling. You would have, I think, to go back to the time of the Black Death to find so general a pessimism. Naturally the competition appealed particularly to the discontented, but I was surprised by the number of entrants who spurned the human condition as such, and wanted to be apes, fish, molecules, or merely dead. Of these the best was "Old Mother Hubbard" who ascribed all our troubles to sex.

> Dream then of the ideal state,
> Envy then the humble skate,
> Look for the time when reproduction
> Was performed without seduction,
> When no personal relation
> Was involved in propagation.

I am not sure how far this is biologically true, for I have seen at the Zoo aquarium a pair of trout conducting a feverish flirtation. Perhaps the humble skate is more impersonal. W. F. Hoyland's nostalgia for apehood was also well expressed, and Mrs. Routh gave a charming picture of the pleasures of being six months old at any period of human history. L. V. Upward plumped for the time of Adam and Eve:

> No need to sharpen up one's claws,
> No need a mailed fig-leaf to don;
> There were no battles won upon
> The playing-field of Eden.

And Little Molly wrote, "I would like to have lived in the first years of his Creation. Then my Adam could not have run after other women." The Age of Ignorance, the age of the clans, the age of Alfred the Great, also had their admirers, while several competitors looked forward to a primitive future. Corydon made a pleasant picture of cave-life in A.D. 2000, and J. Taylor turned *After London* in verse. D. Wayman's 2000 B.C., is similar in its advantages:

> There were no politics, no public schools,
> No Bishops, Cant, or Clerical dissension,
> No Cricket, Queens, or Flags; no worn-out rules
> No Marie Stopes; no Baldwin; no Convention.

Only two competitors described a Socialist future; evidently our despair is too great to indulge in dreams of Utopia. Kenneth S. Kitchin wished

> To be able to speak
> Greek;
> To know the charms
> Of Venus de Milo's arms.

Lucasta wanted the Golden Age of Greek Legend, V. Maxwell, the Augustan Age. The Elizabethan period had two admirers, one of whom surprisingly wanted to see "croquet on the Temple Green," while the other V. Hoare, imagined that then

> At parties, boredom never was acute,
> They drowned the talking as they tuned the lute.

Lucia wrote:

> This I desire—to know a king,
> Who never said a foolish thing.
> This I have wished for all my life—
> To be Charles' mistress and Pepys' wife.

The Age of Reason excited the best arguments. Pithecus, Jane, R. S. Jaffray, and Pendulum defended this taste admirably in prose, and Irene Wilson started some neat verses with

> Oh, century of vicious glory,
> Oh, golden age of Junius, Fox and Paine.

Astraea Starforth pines for the society of Dumas and Lola Montez, and H. R. wrote a poem in praise of the 1850's. Alone of the competitors M. Snow made a good case for the year in which she actually was born, 1884.

All the entries had good things in them, but none was outstanding. Mrs. Routh's nostalgia for infancy was perhaps the best, and I recommend her for Second Prize. The First Prize should, I think, be divided between Martin Walsh and Chômeur. Their entries have a depth of feeling usually absent from the other too facile expressions of despair.

FIRST PRIZE

As I write this I have just had six stitches in my arm at Batley Hospital caused by a crane tearing my arm open. Now, Sir, as you will guess, I don't want an age with cranes that move so fast.

Let's have the fifteenth century. Peaceful woodlands, no National Debt, plenty of work, yes, but plenty of time to do it in.

When I ramble around our old Abbeys, Rievaulx, Fountains, Bolton, etc., all set in pleasant groves, I wish I could put the clock back so that I could loll about; yes, I would be a loller or lollard. Well, it may be my age (45). But my boy says he's for a future age, labour-saving devices, more leisure, and more money. Which of us is right?

MARTIN WALSH

When I consider how my life is spent—without work for six years in a distressed area and with no hope of getting any—I envy my grandfather and the long, full life he lived from 1850 to the 1930's. That—up to 1914—was the golden age to live in, the golden age of capitalism, if you like. That is the age I plump for.

You can call me cowardly and selfish, if you like, afraid of the social struggle of this age. I don't care. Like most honest people, I want a quiet life with a steady job, with no fear of unemployment, the Means Test man, or war; able to save a little in order to enjoy a calm old age in pursuing the hobbies I am interested in. My grandfather—an engine-driver—enjoyed all these. He was never out of work in his life, never poor, never rich, but able to enjoy good meals and a full life, too old to fight in the World War, and dying before his old world finally crashed around him.

Yes! It was a great age of peace and social security—artificial if you like, but none the less desirable for that. The horrors of the Napoleonic and neo-Napoleonic wars, the miseries of early industrialism were past; the frightfulness of social stress, world war, world slump and world Fascism were yet to come. The period 1850–1914 was the best for the average man for centuries. It was a calm between storms, a long quiet afternoon when men, even if mistakenly, could still think good of men and live untroubled lives in no great poverty, neither marred nor made alternately despairful, vitriolic or jumpy by the accumulating horrors that are eating the soul out of me and many like me to-day.

CHÔMEUR

SECOND PRIZE

The period of which I dream is the period from six months to two years old, in the life of any person who has made a good choice of parents, in any era. To live for ever in that period would be bliss.

I should lead a life of wonder, undisturbed by enquiry, untarnished by doubt, and unhampered by the limitations of a supposedly complete scientific education. I should discover ever more and more wonders,

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EVGS., 8.30. MATS., WED. & THURS., at 2.30.
"GEORGE and MARGARET."
COMEDY by GERALD SAVORY.

REPERTORY THEATRES

CROYDON. Repertory.
Evenings 8. Sats., 5 & 8.15.
Foiled, or Right Will Out
By Jacobus Macnab.

HULL. Little.
Evgs., 8. Mat., Sat., 5 p.m.
Retreat From Folly
By Amy Gould & Eileen Russell.

PICTURE THEATRES

ACADEMY CINEMA, Oxford St. Ger. 2981.
THE GREAT RUSSIAN DRAMA,
"WE FROM KRONSTADT" (A.)

EVERYMAN (Opp. Hampstead Tube Stn.) Ham. 2285.
MONDAY, 28th JUNE, for SEVEN DAYS.
FOURTH PLEBISCITE PROGRAMME
MALTHA EGGERTH & HANS JARAY in
UNFINISHED SYMPHONY (U).
(ORIGINAL GERMAN VERSION).

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ENTERTAINMENTS

Lawrence Weaver House, Church St., Leatherhead, Surrey. PURCELL'S
DIDO AND AENEAS
SATURDAY, JUNE 26th, at 7.30 p.m.
To be performed in open air by Borough Polytechnic Singers and Roberjot Quartet. Supper 6–7.15. Tickets at gates, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d. Tel. Leatherhead 2936.

DANCE

HAMPSTEAD SPAIN COMM. Carnival Dance, Hampstead Town Hall, Sat., July 3rd, 8–12. Adm. 2s.

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AH well, if you've not been to RULES you have missed a lot in life . . . Maiden Lane (Covent Garden). Lunch, Dinner, or late Supper (licensed till midnight). Est. 1780.

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and more and more powers. I should have no perception of perspective, either physical or mental; nothing could seem to me to be unattainable or unimportant.

I should have no conscience. I could make everyone near me my slave without the slightest compunction, and with no greater effort than a smile. All my needs would be supplied by adoring people; no thought, effort, or payment would be required from me. The needs of other people would never occur to me. I could live a life of perfect ease without making the smallest effort to remember what I ought to be rushing off to. I should be quite unaware that I ought to consider myself personally responsible for the last Peace, the next War, the sins of the Government, the social system and the state of the world. No one would ever expect me to do anything about anything. I should be above all criticism. Nobody would ever have been quite so wonderful as I. Everything I did would be admired. I should be the centre of a very satisfactory universe. No one in it would matter at all, except me. At that period only could I be a complete Egotist, *sans peur et sans reproche*.

MRS. ROUTH

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 234.—THE BUNMOW FLITCH

"Each year," said Mrs. Betty Boobe, with a smirk of satisfaction, "the number of women voting for me has increased. This year there were three more than last year."

The Boobes have won the Bunmow Flitch five years running (a record). There is a jury of fifty men and ten women. The men vote only for the husbands competing, and the women for the wives. The Flitch is awarded to the pair which secures the highest point-aggregate as determined by the Bunmow Formula. This famous formula (devised by Newton in 1708, the year in which the Flitch was first awarded) is

$$h + w + hw = p$$

where h represents the number of men jurors supporting any husband, w the number of women whose votes go to his wife, and p the resulting point-aggregate.

In spite of the increasing support accorded to the buxom Betty, the Boobes' point-aggregate has been the same each year.

How many men supported Boobe this year?

PROBLEM 232.—ALBATROSS EGGS

A player's expectation after n throws

$$=\left(\frac{7}{2}\right)^n$$

(1) After Sir Everard's first throw, his expectation is $\frac{£4 \cdot 343}{8} = £171\frac{1}{2}$.

But Colonel's expectation is $\frac{£2401}{16} = £150\frac{1}{16}$

Hence he should exercise his option, which is worth $£11\frac{7}{16}$.

(2) After Sir Everard's second throw, his expectation is $\frac{£12 \cdot 49}{4}$ $= £147$.

Hence Colonel should clearly not exercise his option.

(3) After Sir Everard's third throw, his expectation is $\frac{£48 \cdot 7}{2} = £168$.

Hence Colonel, again, should not exercise his option; since his expectation of loss is only $£17\frac{1}{8}$ and his option now costs £30.

(4) After Sir Everard's fourth throw, his credit score is £192.

Hence, mathematically, the Colonel should exercise his option, since his expectation is now $£41\frac{15}{16}$ and his option only costs £40. Whether this mathematical argument would induce a hardened gambler to cut his losses is, of course, another question.

PROBLEM 229

Seven points are awarded. A set of Low's cartoons goes to: R. Martin, 3 Priory Court, N.W.6.

PROBLEM 231

Eight points are awarded. A set of Low's cartoons goes to: G. W. Foss, Springfield, Fernhill Heath, Worcester.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

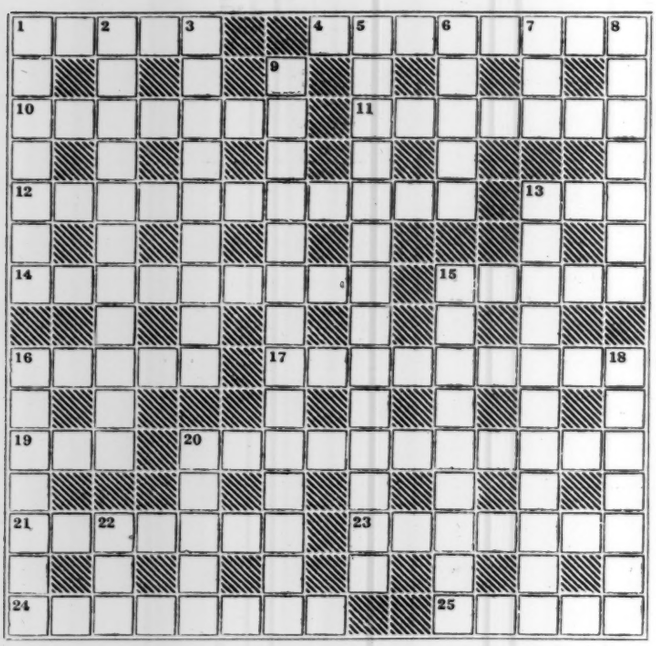
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 381

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Mrs. A. D. Cledwyn, 9 Museum Chambers, W.C.1

ACROSS

1. A shady place.
4. The pruned branch of course.
10. A remedy for ducks no doubt.
11. The opposite of an improvised bed will give one a jolt.
12. Gets knocked about as a featherweight.
13. See 7.
14. Cardiac result of being lily livered?
15. 17 perhaps and 20.
16. Lamented that the cider had turned.
17. Gives many a man a pull to the post.
19. See 22.
20. Those who do commonly use the indirect mode of speech.
21. The nurse carved up the boar.
23. X=TED, apparently.
24. When the high seas so to speak are low.
25. Fruitful surrender.

DOWN

1. What the surgeon uses to amputate fingers?
2. Always a controversial proceeding.
3. Stopped the irritation by cancelling the entry.
5. Elemental incongruity the angler likes to get.
6. Singularly loose trousers.
7. Native gold state on 13.
8. Coiffeur's version of a tie for first place?
9. Dictator's verbal state of mind?
13. Lord Tweedsmuir's novel garment.
15. Insuperable barrier to a job in the Intelligence Department.
16. A problematical contributor.
18. Men indeed misplaced.
20. Youthful mode of hair splitting.
22 & 19. Where Arthur finally took the rest.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

T	U	R	N	L	E	F	T	■	A	C	A	C	I	A
A	■	O	■	A	■	O	■	■	■	H	■	O	■	P
D	O	W	N	P	O	U	R	■	C	A	T	L	A	P
E	■	E	■	L	O	N	■	C	■	T	■	D	■	E
M	O	R	D	A	N	T	■	O	U	T	O	F	I	T
A	■	S	■	T	■	A	■	U	■	E	■	E	■	I
■	■	■	N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	D	E	B	T
S	■	A	■	■	■	N	■	T	■	■	■	T	■	E
M	A	S	T	E	R	P	I	E	C	E	S	■	■	■
A	■	T	■	N	■	E	■	R	■	N	■	A	■	G
R	O	U	C	H	E	N	■	M	A	J	O	R	C	A
T	■	R	■	A	■	S	■	A	■	O	■	J	■	S
S	K	I	N	N	Y	■	A	R	M	Y	H	U	T	S
E	■	A	■	C	■	■	■	C	■	E	■	N	■	E
T	E	S	T	E	D	■	C	H	A	D	B	A	N	D

THE charge for classified advertisements is One Shilling and Sixpence per line per insertion (a line averages seven words). One line should be added for Box Number. Substantial reduction for a series of insertions. Copy first post Wednesday. The Advert. Manager, N.S. & N., 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1. (Hol. 3216.)

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, June 27th, at 11, Dr. BRIDGES, "BELIEF IN THE DEVIL." 7.0, A special Service. Subject: "THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS." Speakers: AIR-COMMODORE L. E. O. CHARLTON, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., and MRS. YVONNE A. M. STOTT.

AEOLIAN HALL, New Bond Street, Theistic Church Service. Sunday, 11: MR. A. STEPHEN NOEL. Subject: "FORWARD TO RELIGION."

THE SEX EDUCATION CENTRE; Unity Theatre Club, Britannia Street, King's Cross. Open Mondays 7–9 p.m. May–July. Library Books 2d. a week; consultations 1s. Programme of lectures sent on request.

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, Holborn.—Sunday, June 27th, at 11 a.m.: PROF. J. C. FLUGEL, D.Sc.: "EXAMINATIONS EXAMINED." Admission Free. Visitors welcome.

FREE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT towards world religion and world brotherhood. Meetings on Sundays at 11 a.m., at Lindsey Hall, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate, W.8. Leader: REV. WILL HAYES. June 27th: "CUMAEAN GATES."

SPAIN. Meeting at CONWAY HALL, Fri., June 25th, at 8 p.m. Chairman: Victor Gollancz. Speakers: Prof. P. M. S. Blackett, Mrs. Leah Manning, Dr. Audrey Russell, Stephen Spender. Organised by Holborn Committee for Spanish Medical Aid, 6 Gordon Sq., W.C.1.

MR. HENNIKER-HEATON on "PSYCHOLOGY AND YOU." London House of Citizenship, 5 Bramham Gardens, S.W.5. Mondays, 11 a.m. FLAX. 6232.

FOR Parents interested in Health of Children: Hampstead Lecture-Demonstration: *New Exercises for Children and Adults*. Monday, June 28th, 8.0. KROHMER SCHOOL, 29 Parliament Hill, N.W.3. Admission free.

S.C.L. RELIGION AND THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, JOHN MACMURRAY, Sunday, June 27th, 8.15 p.m. Christchurch Parish Hall, Watney Street, Commercial Road, E.1.

SUMMER SCHOOLS

ASSOCIATIONS of Assistant Masters and Mistresses Summer School; Selwyn College, Aug. 13th–23rd. Open forum with Pearl Adam, W. G. de Burgh, Arthur Eddington, Ronald Gurner, Middleton Murry, Edith Sitwell, Freda Utley, Arnold Wilson, Humbert Wolfe. Secretary: 29 Gordon Square, W.C.1.

F.P.S.I.

F.P.S.I. Summer Conference at Pannal Ash College, near Harrogate, from Sat., Aug. 7, to Sat., Aug. 14.

PROGRAMME:

C. E. M. JOAD	...	The War Threat—What Can We Do?
NORMAN HAIRE	...	Are our Sex Laws and Conventions Satisfactory?
COL. J. V. DELAHAYE		The Popular Front in Great Britain.
A. A. BURALL	...	The Sun-Bathing Movement.
KENNETH SPENCE	...	The Preservation of the Countryside.
JANET CHANCE	...	Abortion—Secret or Legal.
ALEC CRAIG ...	...	The Banned Books of England.
DORA RUSSELL	...	Education: the Enemy of Fascism.
"SOLICITOR"	...	English Justice in Theory and Practice.

Recreations: Sun-Bathing, Tennis, Swimming, Dancing, and Rambling.

Inclusive Fees:—Sat. tea to Sat. breakfast: Members, 57s. 6d.; non-Members, 65s. Shorter periods: Members, 10s. 6d.; Non-members, 12s. per day. Please remit whole amount or deposit of 20s. to Hon. Sec. F.P.S.I., 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1 ('phone: Museum 6975). Early application desirable to avoid disappointment.

NATURAL HEALTH AND HEALING. Summer School at Lawrence Weaver House, Leatherhead, Surrey, from Aug. 4–25 under auspices of International Cosmotherapeutic Expedition. Principal lecturer, Professor Edmond Székely. Particulars from Sec., Lawrence Weaver House.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

CICELY C. WRIGHT, 50 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. EXPERT ADVICE given, free of charge, on SCHOOLS: also on trainings for Secretarial, Domestic Science and other professions.

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SCHOOLS—continued

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

SLUMP IN KAFFIRS—MR. R. H. BRAND ON GOLD—N.D.C. REVISED—ELECTRICITY STOCKS

THERE is clearly still something rotten in the State of Jo'burg. On Tuesday, while Mr. Havenga was adding his contribution to the growing tale of reassurances with regard to the stability of the present gold price, a flood of selling, mostly of an obviously "distress" character, invaded the Kaffir market from the Cape. Liquidation centred on the Anglo-American group of securities; there were reports that a syndicate of large speculators was in difficulties; and at one moment conditions approaching panic prevailed in Johannesburg, where West Wits. were being flung on the market at £7¼, Western Reefs at 29*s.* 6*d.*, and Anglo-American sold down to 44*s.* At these prices London arbitrageurs took courage in both hands and absorbed most of the stock offered. The slump was followed by a moderate rally; but, even so, the extent of the fall in market valuations of leading Kaffirs since the 1937 peak is sensational, falls of 50 per cent. being common. What we have been witnessing this year is the collapse of the greatest boom in gold-mining shares which the Cape has ever experienced. It is not surprising that the wreckage is taking time to clear away. The astonishing thing is that the slump in share values has occurred in face of the fact that the price of gold still remains at the unchanged and highly remunerative level of 140 shillings per ounce. There is no precedent that I can recall for such a market development.

It is true that the "inactive" stock of gold in the U.S.A. has now passed the billion dollar mark, and that despite official *démentis* of rumoured intentions to lower the U.S. buying price, there is no certainty that gold will be marketable in, say, a year's time at $35 an ounce. Even so, the most inveterate scaremongers are now compelled to admit that there is no likelihood of steps being taken by the U.S. Government, either unilaterally or in conjunction with the other signatories of the Tripartite Agreement, to reduce the price of gold in the near future. In the first place, when allowance is made for the fact that much of the world's monetary gold must necessarily be regarded as the counterpart of "hot money," and hence not available as the basis for its holders' internal credit structure, it is by no means certain that existing stocks, even in the U.S.A. and Britain, are redundant. Against the U.S. gold stock of roughly £2,500 millions there must be offset nearly £1,000 million of "hot money" in America; and from the total of probably £700 millions (valued at 140*s.* and including the Exchange Account's holding) in this country there must be deducted, say, £300 millions for "hot money" in London, to say nothing of the fact that another £200 millions represents the reserves of Empire banks held here in the form of sterling balances.

* * *

Secondly, whatever might be the inclinations of Mr. Montagu Norman, President Roosevelt is unlikely to assent to a step which, for all the theoretic arguments to the contrary, would be bound in practice to have seriously deflationary effects. In a series of articles in the *Times*, Mr. R. H. Brand suggests that if supplies of monetary gold go on being augmented, apart from dishoarding, at the current rate of £250 millions a year, and if a better distribution of gold among central banks cannot be achieved, production may eventually have to be restricted by a moderate cut in the price of gold. Provided such a step were accompanied by *de facto* stabilisation and by a declaration on the part of the leading central banks that there would be no consequential change in their credit policy, Mr. Brand considers that no decline in commodity prices need result. I cannot share Mr. Brand's optimism, or follow his reasoning. A minor revaluation of gold to, say, $34 an ounce, would have no appreciable effect on mining output either in the Rand or, still less, the U.S.S.R.; nor would it modify in any way the influences now making for the accumulation of gold in the U.S.A. and Britain. A cut in the gold price sufficiently drastic to curtail production might still leave the U.S. holding at a figure adequate in terms of revalued dollars to support an expansive credit policy in the States, but it would justifiably occasion fears of enforced deflation eventually by the Bank of England and immediately by the Banque de France, apart from being the last straw for the already straitened French Treasury. The cost of sterilising gold is nugatory, and the very existence of the present ill-balanced accumulation in New York and London is useful in that it points to statesmen the need for greater liberalisation of trade—the only direction from which better distribution of gold can be hoped for. There are enough instabilities in the world already without adding to them by monkeying with the currency value of gold.

* * *

The more explanations Sir John Simon gives of the new N.D.C., the less popular it becomes in the City. It is now realised that if the principle of taxing the special profits of rearmament is to be dropped, there is less justification for the principle of taxing the equity shareholder as against the preferred shareholder or rentier. Sir John Simon showed a strange ignorance of the workings of the company system. In justifying the principle that debenture interest but not preference dividends should be deducted before arriving at the taxable profit figure, he declared that the debenture interest was in the nature of an expenditure incurred in earning the profits whereas the preference dividends were part of the method by which the profits were distributed. In point of fact preference capital is invariably arranged for the sole purpose of earning profits for the equity shareholders who own the business. If it is practicable, and cheaper, to raise money by the issue of loan capital, debenture stock is issued: if it is impracticable (on account of the nature of the chargeable assets), preference stock is issued. Why, then, should Sir John Simon penalise the equity holders of a company which, for no fault of their own, is constructed on preference capital as opposed to loan capital? Where there is considerable benefit to the equity of a company we may now expect preference shareholders to be offered an exchange into a debenture stock.

* * *

Another point arises out of the treatment of preference dividends which at first caused considerable uncertainty in the City. Income from investments is not included in the taxable profit except in the case of companies whose main business is the holding of investments or other properties (such as investment trusts, insurance companies or building societies). But there was no intention, said Sir John Simon, of imposing the tax a second time; that is, if a trust company drew dividends from 100 companies which had themselves borne the N.D.C., the trust would

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not be liable to pay N.D.C. again on its income from that source. And what dividends would be included? If the trust drew income from 100 companies by way of equity dividends it would not pay N.D.C.; but would it pay if it drew its income by way of preference dividends? As the Finance Bill now suggests that income from preference dividends will not be taxed, investment trusts will probably tend to increase the proportion of preference shares, as opposed to debentures, in their portfolios. Incidentally, the Chancellor made it clear that stockbrokers and jobbers were not exempt professions in the meaning of the Bill, but it has been suggested that the Stock Exchange itself might claim exemption as a Distressed Area. However, the Stock Exchange is not the only stricken field. Finance houses have been forced to hold up many new issues since N.D.C. was introduced.

* * *

I can suggest only one equity stock for investment which escapes N.D.C., and this is virtually a fixed interest security. It is the ordinary stock of London Associated Electricity Undertakings, Ltd., which is subject to statutory control of dividends. This company took over the electricity supply companies which operate under the London Electricity Act of 1925, that is, which pay a fixed dividend of 7 per cent. until 1971, when their shares are repayable at par. Extra dividends can, however, be paid out of earnings under the Consumers' Benefit clause of the Act. In the case of this company, earnings under the Consumers' Benefit clause amounted to 1.3 per cent. in the last two years and were placed to reserve. It is interesting to observe that an annual surplus of 1 per cent. net accumulated at say 2½ per cent. net would allow repayment of the company's ordinary stock in 1971 at about 31*s.* per £1 unit. At the present market price of 31*s.* 6*d.* the ordinary stock yields £4 8*s.* 9*d.* per cent. flat on dividends of 7% or £3 18*s.* per cent. allowing for redemption in 1971 at par. If, however, redemption can be effected at 31*s.* as a result of the accumulation of reserves out of Consumers' Benefit, the gross yield to redemption would be £4 8*s.* per cent. I regard this as a first-class investment with a not unattractive yield: it compares very favourably with Central Electricity Board stocks offering lower yields and an inferior security.

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Company Meeting

ANGLO-IRANIAN OIL COMPANY.

THE RIGHT HON. LORD CADMAN'S ADDRESS.

PRESIDING at the meeting of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Limited, held in London on June 21st, the Right Hon. Lord Cadman of Silverdale, G.C.M.G., D.Sc. (Chairman), in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said: The most striking figure is the trading profit of £9,443,950, which shows the remarkable increase of £3,464,741. This increase is almost entirely due to the growth of nett proceeds from the sale of oil, and the most satisfactory feature is that nearly 60 per cent. of the increase is attributable to expansion in sales tonnage, the nett price realised having advanced by less than 7½ per cent. Increased production and the larger profit participation of the Iranian Government, owing to the higher dividend on the Ordinary stock, account for the increase under Royalty.

THE BALANCE-SHEET

Turning now to the balance-sheet, I would particularly ask you to look at the first figure on the assets side, £3,877,228. This figure represents the written down value of the refinery at Abadan, and the equipment for the distribution organisation in Iran which is growing rapidly. As the tonnage handled was just over 8,000,000 tons, the present book value of the above assets is under 10*s.* per ton, a truly remarkable figure.

The only other items to which I need refer are: Stock of Stores, etc. —£1,210,445. The increase here is due partly to rise in prices of materials, and partly to anticipatory purchases owing to fear of late delivery. Creditors and Sundry Liabilities. The increase of just over £1,000,000 is mainly due to increased provision for British taxation and for royalty payable to the Iranian Government.

During the year under review our total production and receipts of crude oil amounted to 9,517,000 tons, of which 8,198,000 tons were obtained from our fields in Iran and 1,219,000 tons were received from the Iraq Petroleum Company.

EXPLORATORY DRILLING IN IRAN

I am happy to inform you that in our search for further producing areas we have been successful in proving oil at Gach Qaraghuli, which lies some 125 miles South-East of Haft Kel and 155 miles East of Abadan. The first well to prove important production entered the Asmari limestone at 3,364 feet, and gave a production of about 400 tons a day. Another well on the opposite flank of the structure has been drilled into the limestone, and on test it has produced oil at a rate equivalent to a daily output of over 4,000 tons.

DEMAND FOR "HIGH OCTANE" SPIRIT

The demand for what is termed "high octane" spirit has made great calls on the research, development and refining sides of our operations.

Plant is now being installed in our refineries to operate processes— —only recently developed—to utilise certain constituents of the gas evolved in reforming as a raw material for the production of fuels of even higher octane rating than is normally required for motor-car use. From this source we shall have ideal blending materials for the production of aviation spirit.

Since I last addressed you, demand for tonnage has greatly increased, all the vessels which were laid up have gone to sea again, and freights have risen sharply.

During the latter part of 1936, our fleet was supplemented by new ships ordered under the programme in hand. Their performance, in speed and fuel consumption, reflects credit upon designers and builders. The fleet now consists of 84 vessels of an aggregate deadweight tonnage of 843,000 tons. Four vessels of our current building programme remain to be delivered; and we have recently placed orders for a further nine motor-ships for delivery during 1938–39.

PROSPECTS

It is obvious that, in many respects, the prosperity of the petroleum industry, and consequently of the Company, is largely determined by external conditions. Internally, the industry seems to me to be healthier than it has been for a long time past. Last year, as you have realised, was a prosperous year for us, and signs are not wanting that this prosperity will continue. The Board have, therefore, formed the opinion that the time has now come when the issued capital of the Company should be brought into closer relationship with the capital employed in the business.

In a comprehensive undertaking such as ours, working on small margins and embracing every phase from producing the crude to the collection of the ultimate sale proceeds of the products from the consumer, there are many uncertainties and fluctuations. You will understand, therefore, that it is quite impracticable to say what will be our earning capacity for any great length of time ahead. So far as this year has gone, however, results are favourable, sales tonnage continues to expand, and sales prices have further increased.

The report was unanimously adopted, and resolutions increasing the capital of the Company by the creation of 6,500,000 new Ordinary shares of £1 each, capitalising part of the reserves and making an issue of bonus shares were approved.

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HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS continued on opposite page

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS

(Continued from page 1082.)

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Further particulars may be obtained from the undersigned, by whom applications must be received on or before July 7th, 1937.

EDWIN DREW, Registrar.

Singleton Park, Swansea.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

The Civil Service Commissioners announce a vacancy for an Assistant Director of Examinations in their Department. The post will be filled by competitive interview held at the Civil Service Commission on 20th July. Application for interview must be made by Saturday, 10th July on a form which can be obtained, with full information, from the Secretary, Civil Service Commission, 6 Burlington Gardens, London, W.1.

The post is open to both sexes. Candidates must be between 24 and 30 years of age on 10th July, 1937. They should be university graduates with honours in Modern Languages, preferably first class. The languages chiefly required are French and German. Some experience in teaching is essential.

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DAVID J. KEEP, Town Clerk

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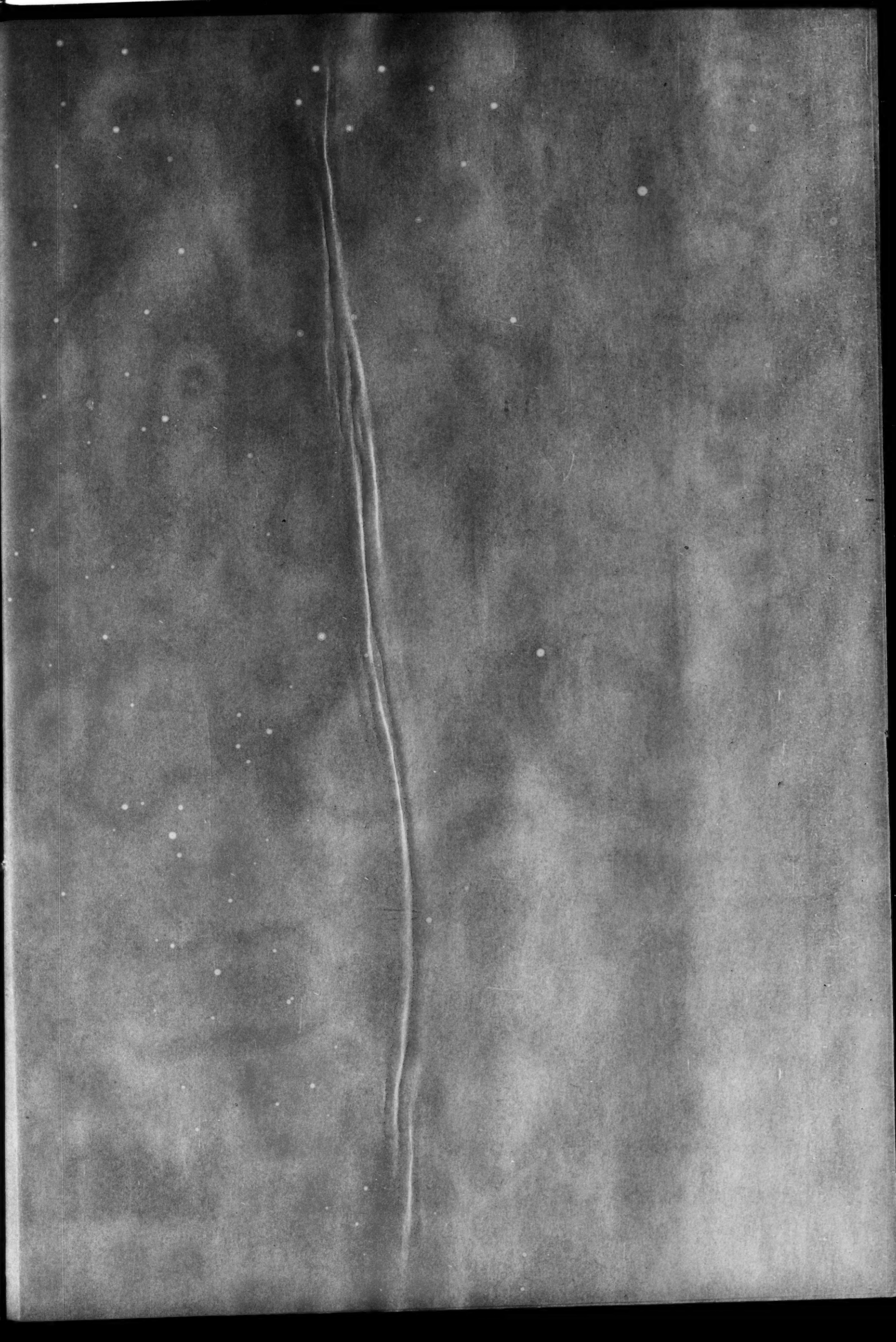
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